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# Land tax collection aims to cool real estate

By Chu Meng

The State Administration of Taxation announced on its website on Wednesday that beginning Feb. 1, it will levy a value-added tax on land. The tax will levy a sum equivalent to 30-60 percent of developers' net gain from a property deal.

The resumption of land tax collection from real estate developers, in abeyance for over a decade in China, is the central government's latest effort to cool the country's overheated property market.

Booming house prices have led to developers hoarding large tracts of land whilst dragging their feet on projects, in the hope of making big profits from the appreciation of land prices. The practice, in turn,

has led to house prices skyrocketing in major cities.

The value-added tax on land was written into a national regulation in 1993, but was not widely collected due to a subsequent recession in the real estate sector. With China's real estate investment surging and house prices rocketing, the tax collection resumed in Shenzhen at the end of last year.

Shares of Chinese property developers plunged Wednesday afternoon in reaction to the government's announcement. Shares of Shenzhen-based developer China Vanke Company, the country's largest property developer, dropped 10 percent to 17.28 yuan; and that of Poly Real Estate, the nation's biggest State-owned developer, slid

nearly 10 per cent to 52.03 yuan.

Xiao Li, secretary of Vanke's board of directors said, "With the reintroduction of the value-added tax on land, the property sector will rank among the industries with the heaviest tax burdens in China, and falling profits will dampen future investment in the sector."

He worried that "some developers may suffer great pressure once the tax is formally collected. Vanke had set aside 300 million yuan in 2006 in preparation for the reintroduction of the tax."

In 2006, the price of newly built commercial housing in many Chinese cities saw a year-on-year hike of more than 10 percent, despite government policies aimed at stabilizing housing

prices. Investment in China's real estate sector surged 24 percent year-on-year in the first 11 months of 2006, three percent higher than that of the first quarter.

Charles Zhang, of Colliers International Property Services said, "The tax changes will greatly narrow the profit margins of developers."

A recent report by *New Real Estate Magazine*, real estate found that prices in Beijing have increased by 42 percent over the past three years.

Zhang Qi, a researcher with the Institute of Economic and Resources Management said, "The tax signals the government's resolve to regulate the property market."

## Hong Kong limits entry of pregnant mainlanders

By Han Manman

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's government announced Tuesday that new medical and immigration measures will be adopted beginning February 1 to limit the number of pregnant mainlanders who come to the city to give birth.

During the press conference, Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food Patrick Nip said the new regulations aim to ensure Hong Kong residents get proper and priority treatment.

Under the new measures, pregnant mainlanders need to have an appointment with a Hong Kong hospital and undergo pre-delivery tests before they can use local maternity services.

The Hong Kong Hospital Authority (HA) will also raise the minimum fee for non-local women from the current HK\$20,000 to HK\$39,000 beginning February 1. Those who haven't made prior arrangements with hospitals need to pay a surcharge of HK\$9,000. The HA will issue a certificate to non-local women after their bookings are confirmed.

At the same time, the Hong Kong immigration department will closely scrutinize non-locals who are over seven months pregnant. Immigration officers have the right to refuse entry to pregnant women wanting to enter the city without the required documents.

The new regulations come as a response to the increasing number of mainland women flocking to Hong Kong to take advantage of better hospitals, some leaving their maternity bills unpaid. The influx of mainlanders overloads Hong Kong hospitals, which, strains their resources and leads to poorer maternity service for locals.

## Pork scare spreads among locals

By Han Manman

News of an outbreak of a fatal brain disease caused by pork dishes was proven an unfounded rumor by Beijing health and agriculture agencies.

Zhao Chunhui, deputy head of the local health bureau, and Liu Yaqing, deputy head of the local agriculture bureau, refuted the rumor spreading via mobile phone short messages saying, "Don't eat pork! Pork in Beijing has been contaminated by a fatal virus that can cause pyogenic encephalitis and destroys the brain."

Zhao said the short message was "simply not true." Liu said the disease "pyogenic encephalitis" does not even exist.

The short message has given some people sleepless nights. Many Beijingers who have eaten pork in recent days are suffering a psychosomatic attack, complaining of an imaginary upset stomach and other pains after receiving the message from friends or relatives.

Zhao also denied the news that heads of major hospitals in Beijing held an emergency meeting on the issue. She said pork sold in Beijing has to meet strict quality standards and be fit for human consumption.

## Five kidnapped Chinese workers released in Nigeria



Five Chinese telecom workers kidnapped in Nigeria were released safely yesterday, according to China's Foreign Ministry.

The Chinese government expressed its appreciation for the support and assistance of relevant parties in Nigeria.

Unidentified armed men kidnapped five Chinese telecommunication workers in Rivers State, southern Nigeria.

China's Party and state leaders gave the incident high priority and urged relevant departments to make the utmost efforts to rescue the five kidnapped workers, the press release said.

(Xinhua)

## Policewoman loses job due to husband exchange games

By Chen Shasha

Su Jing, a 30-year-old woman, recently lost her job at the public security bureau in Liquan, Shaanxi province, after publicly talking about her spouse-swapping experience.

As one of the first Chinese women to discuss her experience of "exchanging husbands" on a widely followed online program, her actions stimulated heated debate and turned her life upside-down.

### Escaping a common life

Su is the mother of a six-year-old girl and got married eight years ago to a temporary staff member at a police station.

In 2004, she got bored with her job, so she and her husband enrolled at the Chinese People's Public Security University in Beijing. During that time, she fell in love with a guy and all but had sex with him. "I felt it was wrong and I should stop," Su said.

However, she wanted more excitement in her life. "Ever since childhood, I've never liked discipline, so I talked to my husband if I could engage in husband exchange to add spice to our life," she said.

The suggestion saddened her husband, who refused, but Su wouldn't give up. She looked for spouse swapping videos from abroad to support her idea. According to her, her husband eventually understood her and helped her carry out the plan.

They found a married man online. "He was 28 years old, 182cm tall, had a master's degree and looked good," Su said. The three went to a restaurant, chatted happily, but she still felt nervous thinking about having sex with two men. "I kept cheering myself on. I said I should escape from a life in which I found no color," Su said. That night, the three had sex in a hotel.

Afterwards, Su said that she loved her husband more than ever.

In 2006, Su and her husband established a husband/wife exchange website. To become a member, people need to pay 60 yuan per year. Members can exchange photos through the website. Within a year, more than 60,000 people registered, and many successfully exchanged spouses.

### Unexpected life changes

Last October, a Phoenix TV online program discussed spouse swapping, and Su wrote to the program, asking to be invited as a guest. After speaking on the program, her life changed unexpectedly.

According to a survey by Phoenix TV, more than 46 percent of people think spouse-swapping is common. However, after the program was broadcast, she found herself the target of public criti-



Su Jing

Photo provided by Phoenix TV website

cism in her town. A month later, the Liquan public security bureau fired her. Her daughter was also affected by the events and had to change schools.

Her site became hugely popular. Some accused her of besmirching the reputation of the police force, while others supported her, many even asking to have sex with her. The deluge of visitors overloaded her website and she closed it this Tuesday.

According to Ganggang, the Phoenix TV producer who invited her to be a guest, Su moved with her family to Beijing.



# Test-tube births to save endangered Manchurian tiger

By Han Manman

Zoologists at the world's largest breeding base for Manchurian tigers artificially inseminated a four-year-old tigress last Saturday, marking the start of research into artificial insemination for China's rare species in an effort to save the highly endangered tiger. The technique can also avoid inbreeding and genetic degeneration in the remaining tiger population.

Sperm were taken from a seven-year-old healthy male reared in captivity but trained to live in the forest like his wild fore-

bears. Zoologists at the breeding center in northeastern Heilongjiang province hope the inseminated tigress will have a better chance of becoming pregnant and having healthy cubs with good genes from the father.

Liu Dan, from the breeding program, said it will be two months before zoologists know if the insemination has succeeded. "From observations over the past four days, things haven't gone as well as we had hoped. We are not sure if the insemination succeeded," Liu said the only success-

ful similar artificial insemination was carried out in the US. "This is the first time we've tried in China. If it fails this time, we will find another tiger to try again until we succeed," said Liu.

Liu said artificial insemination and DNA testing can help to better protect the tigers, and it saves the trouble of bringing in a tiger from far away, even overseas, to ensure genetic diversity and avoid inbreeding.

Professor Liu Yutang, of Northeast Forestry University, said the preparations for the test insemination began last April. Liu said if it succeeds, the technique could also be used in other rare species like the South China Tiger, which is even more endangered than its Manchurian cousin, with only around 30 animals known to exist in China.

The Manchurian tiger, also known as the Amur or Siberian tiger, is one of the world's 10 most endangered species. Most of the few remaining wild tigers live in northeast China and the far east of Russia. There are an estimated 400 animals living in the wild in China.

Professor Liu Yutang, of Northeast Forestry University, said the preparations for the test insemination began last April. Liu said if it succeeds, the technique could also be used in other rare species like the South China Tiger, which is even more endangered than its Manchurian cousin, with only around 30 animals known to exist in China.

## Plan to salvage 1,000-year-old sunken ship from South China Sea

By Qiu Jiaoning

China will salvage a large commercial ship, which sank in the South China Sea during the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127 AD), within the first half of this year, Song Jiahui, director-general of the Rescue and Salvage Bureau (RSB) under the Ministry of Communications (MOC), announced Tuesday.

The ship - named the South China Sea No 1 - will be raised intact and then moved to a specially-built museum, which has been under construction since 2005 on Hailing Island, 20 sea miles away from the location of the wreck.

Song said that it will be MOC's largest ever salvage operation. The RSB's Guangzhou branch will conduct the operation, in which the sunken ship's hull will be lifted by a salvage ship capable of hoisting 4,000 tons.

A large crane ship, the Nantianshun, is conducting a full maritime survey around the South China Sea No 1, according to *Yangcheng Evening News*, who have a correspondent on the Nantianshun. Jiang Zhibin, deputy director of the salvage operation, told the *Yangcheng Evening News* that this is the final exploration and analysis work and that salvage will begin in March.

The sunken ship, which carried a cargo of rare and priceless treasures, was discovered in 1986. Salvage teams have since been exploring the wreck and designing a salvage plan. Archaeological experts regard the ship as potentially as valuable and influential a discovery as the Terra-cotta Warriors at the tomb of Qin Shi Huang in Xi'an, if it can be successfully salvaged.



## Thirty-five miners trapped underground

Rescuers carrying one of six miners brought to the surface yesterday at a mineral mine near Baotou, Inner Mongolia. A flood early Wednesday trapped 35 miners underground.

Xinhua Photo

## Guess who is coming to dinner

By Huang Daohen

They say there's no such thing as a free lunch, but Huang Ke, director of a local investment company, would perhaps beg to differ. Since 1999, he has hosted free dinners every day at his home for neighbors and friends.

No reservations are required, it doesn't cost a penny and you can eat and drink all you like. Huang believes more than 20,000 different dinner guests have enjoyed his largesse over the years.

Huang spends about 20,000 yuan (US\$2,570) every month to pay for the meals, according to his cook Ms Peng.

"What I get out of it is friendship," Huang says, "which is the most precious thing in the world. As more people come and eat with me, my circle of friends grows and my life gets richer."

Huang, who moved to Beijing from Chongqing municipality in 1983, is now 51 years old and owns an investment company. He, and his home at number 607 in Wangjing in Chaoyang District, are local legends. Guests at a meal can number between 10 and 60, and include poets, magazine editors, government officials and business partners. Most do not know each other before sharing Huang's table together.

"I only know a few of them, but it doesn't matter, anybody who comes is my friend. We are all equal here," Huang says. He has a theory as to why his dinners are popular. "As I'm a bachelor, my guests don't have to worry about upsetting their hostess." Huang also runs a relaxed household, caring little for domestic rules, so his guests feel at home, he says.

Media coverage has led to an increase in diners. Er Mao, a poet and also one of Huang's best friends, said, "We still hope guests will share similar interests, as we also have to think about the economics of the thing."

## Chinese maritime rescue success rate up to 95.7 percent

By Qiu Jiaoning

Chinese maritime rescue teams successfully rescued 16,753 out of 17,498 persons in distress, including 962 foreigners, within the sea area for which they have search and rescue responsibility, achieving a success rate of 95.7 percent, an official of China's Ministry of Communications (MOC) said at a press conference on Tuesday.

Xu Zuyuan, vice minister at the MOC, said the country organized and coordinated 1,620 major search and rescue operations last year, involving 5,322 ships and yachts, 274 times of planes. Xu gives a typical example of a successful rescue: 22 Vietnamese fishing boats with 330 crew were successfully rescued during Typhoon Pearl.

The Rescue and Salvage Bureau of MOC runs the only professional rescue team in China. Since 2003, the bureau has set up rescue teams in Yantai, Shanghai and Guangzhou. The helicopter-ship rescue model they use employs nine helicopters and 52 ships, in locations that include Dalian, Yantai, Shanghai, Xiamen and Zhanjiang, said Song Jiahui, general director of the Rescue and Salvage Bureau.

China Marine Search and Rescue Center (CMSRC) has strengthened cooperation with foreign organizations of its kind. Song said, "CMSRC has recently collaborated with a US search and rescue organization and successfully rescued 18 Chinese fishermen in danger in waters 500 kilometers off Guam." The MOC has also started talks with Japan, the Republic of Korea and Vietnam on cooperation in maritime search and rescue.

## Brief news

### Larger foreign exchange reserves

The country's foreign exchange reserves rose to over US\$1 trillion last year, up more than 30 percent on the figure for 2005, the People's Bank of China announced this week.

### Cable TV at luxury hotels

Thirty-one cable TV broadcasters from outside the Chinese mainland, including CNN, the BBC and Phoenix, will be available this year at three-star and better hotels, according to an announcement made Wednesday by the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television.

### More crimes solved

The police solved some 1.95 million criminal cases last year, up more than four percent on the figure for 2005, according to the Ministry of Public Security.

### More investment abroad

China's multinational enterprises invested over US\$16 billion overseas last year, a full 32 percent more than in 2005, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

### Fish species lost

One third of the some 150 species of fish in the Yellow River are believed to have become extinct due to human encroachment and low rainfall, the Ministry of Agriculture said this week.

(By Jiang Xubo)

## Shanghai Expo starts global search for mascot

By Chen Shasha

Organizers of the upcoming Expo 2010 Shanghai announced this Wednesday that they are starting a worldwide search for the design of the official mascot for the event, due to be held from May 1 to October 31, 2010.

Design for the mascot are expected to tie in with the organizer's chosen theme, 'Better

City, Better Life,' and should be something that can be used in a variety of media.

Interested designers can visit expo2010china.com for detailed information. Designs can be

sent to the Bureau of Shanghai World Expo before May 31 by post. Email submissions will not be accepted. The winning design will earn its designer a prize of 200,000 yuan (US\$25,700).





A mother carries her son through fields of foreign filth in Lianjiao, Guangdong province.

# UK rubbish dumped on China

By Chu Meng

Lianjiao, a remote village near Guangzhou, capital of south China's Guangdong province, was unknown to most of the world until it got caught in trashy business – importing garbage from the UK.

Britain's Sky News TV aired a program titled "Are you poisoning China?" last week, revealing how UK plastic waste was ending up in Lianjiao. The report sparked protests and calls for official action, and people were further incensed to learn Maersk Lines, which shipped China-made Christmas presents to Britain, was delivering the toxic payloads to China.

The business met its death when the Chinese government ended waste shipments from other countries, yesterday.

## Choking livelihood

Not one Briton imagined the plastic he or she was carefully setting aside for recycling was ending up halfway around the world in Lianjiao village in recycling yards that line the town's streets. Chinese workers there were surrounded by mountains of plastic shopping bags and choked on toxic fumes from the burning plastics. Nearby rivers were blackened by chemical waste from incineration.

The workers here earn about 750 yuan per month by shredding the plastic and melting it down into small chips for reuse. For poor farmers who labor in the town it's a desperately needed source of income.

Holly Williams, Sky TV's reporter in Asia said, Wednesday, "We visited yard after yard full of rubbish from across Europe. We watched a container truck unloading household waste from France. Another yard specialized in German plastic."

"Next door, we found a container-load of household rubbish fresh off the boat from Britain. Baled and compressed by the companies that ship it here, it was stacked to the ceilings. Workers sifted through shopping bags from Tesco and Asda. We saw Sainsbury's milk bottles, packaging from Cadbury chocolates, and plastic wrappings from pet food," she said.

Lianjiao is a global rubbish dump, and the workers here – though often illiterate – seem to have a profound grasp of economics. More than 15,000 villagers from 400 families depend upon trash imports for their livelihood.

Plastic waste is now one of Britain's biggest exports to China. Container ships arrive in Britain from China loaded with consumer goods. Many of them then return-packed full of British waste.



A village boy's hands are caked in filth after days of exploring the heaps.

"You don't do this kind of work anymore because in your city, you're rich," Chen Xiaomei, 40, a waste scavenger, said. "We're poor, so we still have to. If we plant crops, we can only earn around 2,000 yuan per year. But this work pays much quicker; as much as 700 to 800 yuan every month."

## Exporting tons to save pounds

Back in the Britain, Holly Williams spoke to Peter Pottier, resident of a quaint cottage on a quiet street in Sevenoaks and an avid recycler.

"I was disturbed to hear my best environmental efforts ended up harming others halfway around the world," he said. "We do our bit to make sure we separate for recycling. I was not expecting it would end up being sorted by individuals without even gloves, breathing toxic air, drinking toxic river water."

Plastic waste is now one of Britain's biggest exports to China. Container ships arrive in Britain from China loaded with consumer goods. Many of them then return-packed full of British waste.

Recycling costs are very expensive in Britain. Burial, the most common recycling method, costs companies 1,700 yuan (US\$218) for each ton of rubbish.

The UK government offers only a 490 yuan (US\$62) subsidy for each ton of trash recycled.

To shave costs, most companies directly export unsorted trash to developing countries like China, where they are paid 1,500 yuan (US\$192) by Chinese importers. In other words, the companies are making money from both sides: not only receiving government subsidy, but also being paid by Chinese importers. They easily make 2,000 yuan (US\$257) for each ton of trash.

But British waste could be safely recycled back home. British Sky News reported that Leigh Atley runs a plastic recycling plant in the Cotswolds – one built to the highest environmental standards. He loses millions of pounds in income – as well as the chance to expand his business and provide more jobs – because he can't compete with the Chinese dumps.

"We need to have our own infrastructure in this country capable of recycling everything that we are producing every year," he told Sky TV. "But for now it is simply cheaper to ship our problem to China."

## Violating the law

"The bags should have been classified before being imported, but they were not. Some are non-degradable and contain hazardous substances," Yang Sujuan, deputy director of the Research Institute on Environmental Law in China University of Political Science and Law, said.

Yang said importing hazardous waste was a blatant violation of national laws regulating environment protection, and the local customs failed to curb the profitable trade in smuggled waste. "A lot of waste is dumped and burned in open air sites when it should have been delivered to qualified processing factories and supervised by local authorities," Yang said.

Mao Da, a member of Global Village of China, a Beijing-based environmental NGO said, "Incineration will produce dioxins, highly-toxic and carcinogenic substances that harm not only the workers, but also local people. Both importers and exporters violated the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal. Local environment authorities should order immediate proper disposal of the imported waste."



Fujian villagers can't help but inhale the thick, toxic smoke given off when burning down imported waste.



Villagers labor to sort through the garbage piles purchased from overseas.



An old woman struggles under the burden of a bag heavy with British waste.

CFP Photos



# China slashes domestic fuel prices



Domestic gasoline prices were slashed by 220 yuan per ton last Sunday.

CFP Photo

**BELJING (AP)** — China has cut the price of domestic gasoline by about four percent and jet fuel by around two percent in response to a decline in world oil prices.

China's main planning agency, the State Development and Reform Commission, said in a statement on its website, Sunday, that the price cuts were effective

immediately.

The official Xinhua News Agency said the move followed complaints from consumers who demanded domestic prices reflect international market trends. China's last such price cut was in March, 2005, Xinhua reported.

The government has resisted appeals by economists to let the market set prices, afraid that a

big jump would ignite inflation and cause social unrest.

China is one of the world's top three oil consumers, along with the United States and Japan. The government has tried in recent years to insulate the economy from soaring prices by requiring Chinese oil companies to absorb much of the increase.

However, crude oil has lost

a third of its value since last summer, when the commodity's eight-year bull market stumbled after briefly surpassing US\$78 a barrel. In 1998, oil traded as low as US\$10.35.

China met its oil needs from domestic wells until the late 1990s, but imports have soared since then amid booming economic growth.

## Beijing intensifies road repair, construction for 2008 Olympics

**BELJING (APP)** — Beijing will repair over 40 main roads, construct 27 artery roads and nine expressways this year in its preparation for the 2008 Olympic Games, official sources said. The Chinese capital will spend 111.5 million dollars to repair and renovate the east-west artery Chang'an Avenue, the secretary of the Beijing municipal committee of the Communist Party of China Liu Qi, has said. Liu Qi pointed out that the 2007 is the "decisive year" for the city to make preparations for the Games.

Beside the road repair and construction projects, Beijing will emphasize the development of light railways and subways. The city will start four new projects while continuing with five ongoing ones, including the airport light rail line, according to the transportation committee.

## Beijing out to nab marriage cheats

**BELJING (www.int.iol.co.za)** — China's capital has announced a new marriage database to catch out bigamists in an increasingly mobile society prone to nuptial double-dealers, state media reported Wednesday.

Beijing's current marriage registration procedure is "quite simple," needing only an official identity card and local residence pass from would-be spouses, Xinhua reported, quoting a city official.

"This failed to stop the use of fake documents by fraudsters," the report noted. "Meanwhile, some people who had already married in other places married again in Beijing."

The new database will include residence and marriage and divorce records, and will cover records more than two years old, Xinhua reported.

## Identity check for secondhand computer and mobile sales

**SHANGHAI (INTERFAX)** — Beijing now requires an identity check for secondhand computer and mobile phone deals, state media reported.

Representatives from a number of secondhand product dealers recently signed agreements with the Beijing police, consenting to register the identities of buyers and sellers of six kinds of products including computers, mobile phones, cables, automobiles, bicycles and precious metals, said *The Beijing News*.

The Beijing police will install surveillance cameras and ID card checking machines at Beijing's secondhand markets to prevent the transaction of illegal or fake products. In addition, all recycled products must be registered with surveillance offices under the control of the Beijing police.

People who are involved in illegal transactions or are harboring large numbers of fake or illegal products can be sentenced to prison.

The report also noted that the Beijing police will formulate regulations to control illegal transactions over the Internet.

## Expert comment

By Jiang Xubo

"The cut in domestic gasoline prices is mainly a response to a change in the world oil market," said Chen Fengying, director of the Institute of World Economic Studies, China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations. "Generally speaking, world oil prices have been in decline since last September. The warm winter contributed to reduction

in demand for heating oil. As a result, world market prices for gasoline have stayed between US\$51 and US\$52 per barrel, which is lower than expected. Low world market prices provide a good opportunity for China to cut its domestic gasoline price and adjust the mechanism used to set prices."

"The price cuts are somewhat belated but still make sense. Usually it takes the domestic gasoline market several months to respond to a change in the world market. Gasoline is also still a special commodity in our country and its price is currently determined more by the government than by the market. The government has to make sure that the market stays stable and consumers can afford oil," the scholar added.

"A time when the price remains low is also a good opportunity for the country to introduce a fuel tax, which will help encourage consumers to adopt more energy-saving habits. That should ease pressure on the environment and energy resources. If the price stays below US\$50 per barrel, it will be a good opportunity to introduce such a tax," Chen said.

# Beijing talks tough to home-grown polluters

**BELJING (the Australian)** — The biggest industrial polluters in China have been ordered to halt all new projects in an effort to force them to take immediate action to meet environmental standards.

The companies include four of China's six biggest energy groups, with strong links to some of the most powerful Communist Party leaders.

The order follows China's failure last year to meet targets for saving energy and controlling pollution, a failure that the government has admitted.

Energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product rose by 0.8 percent in the first half of last year.

China's environmental record has been severely criticised by signatories of the Kyoto Protocol on emissions. The country is the second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases behind the United States.

China's environmental watch-

dog has launched an unprecedented crackdown.

In addition to imposing strict controls on the power industry, the State Environmental Protection Agency has suspended approval for all new projects in four industrial cities.

The four hit are Tangshan in northern Hebei province, Luliang in coal-rich Shanxi province, Liupanshui in impoverished southern Guizhou and Laiwu in Shandong province.

The agency accused the cities of causing serious pollution and said that they had approved projects that violated environmental laws.

Pan Yue, the agency's deputy head, has become one of the most outspoken members of China's traditionally secretive government.

He said that he remained committed to enforcing measures that would improve the country's environmental record, despite the pressure being

brought to bear to curtail the powers of his agency.

Pan said, "We have moved step by step, but it's difficult.

Nevertheless we are determined. And as for my own personal gains and losses, I gave up thinking about that a long time ago."

## Expert comment

By Jiang Xubo

"I have no doubt that the measure will be good for the country's environment protection," Shi Zulin, a researcher from the School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University, said. "But I don't think it is proper to impose the same measure on different areas with no consideration for how developed they are."

"The measure may only have an insignificant impact on developed areas, while it may greatly harm economic growth in developing areas like Liupanshui in Guizhou province, where growth relies heavily on major projects. So it would be better if the government could take regional

difference into account when enforcing the measures, while of course evaluating as necessary a project's impacts on the environment," Shi said.

"The order to halt all new projects, especially those of the country's four major energy groups, will encourage environmental awareness, which should help the country to reduce energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product, and cut emissions of pollutants. The government also needs to introduce a strict standard for energy saving and to monitor enterprise energy consumption, as a matter of urgency, something commonly seen in other countries," Shi said.



# CNPC to invest US\$3.6 billion in Iran gas block

Beijing, January 18 (AFP) – China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC), the country's biggest oil producer, will invest US\$3.6 billion to develop a block in Iran's offshore gas field.

CNPC is still negotiating with Iran over the details of the project expected to lead to a seven-year deal to develop Block 14 of the South Pars gas field, the *China Business News* said.

It added the company will invest US\$1.8 billion on exploration of the block, which is reported to have natural gas reserves of 370 billion cubic meters.

Another US\$1.8 billion will be used to build a liquefied natural gas plant with an annual output of 4.5 million tons.

China has ratcheted up a global search for energy over

the past few years as the nation seeks to secure resources that can power the world's fastest growing major economy.

Last week, Iran announced it would finalize, in February, a US\$16 billion gas agreement with China's largest offshore oil producer CNOOC despite Washington's threat to slap sanctions on Tehran over its nuclear program.

Beijing is already the second

largest buyer of energy products from Iran, home to the world's second biggest proven oil reserves after Saudi Arabia and the second biggest gas reserves after Russia.

Last month, PetroChina signed a deal with National Iranian Gas Exports Company in which Iran agreed to sell China three million tons of gas from the Pars LNG project over 25 years, beginning in 2011.

## UN: China not immune to global slowdown

By Qiu Jiaoning

China's economy isn't immune to a global economic slowdown, a UN report warned on Wednesday.

According to the report, *UN World Economic Situation and Prospects 2007*, China's exports, although spread across all regions, remain highly correlated to the demand of major developed economies.

China is expected to grow at a robust pace of 9 percent in 2007, only a slight moderation from the 10.5 percent growth rate estimated for 2006, the report said.

China's exports have grown at a pace of as much as 20 percent per year since entry into the WTO five years ago. If this trend continues, China will become the world's largest exporting economy by 2009.

On domestic aspects of the Chinese economy, the report points out that despite spectacular growth, China has apparently not succeeded in solving its unemployment problems.

## S&P: Eight companies to outperform foreign peers

By Chen Shasha

Eight companies in China are poised to outperform their global peers and deliver superior returns to investors this year, according to the 'S&P Global Picks 2007' report issued this Monday.

The report is a model portfolio of 30 stocks constructed annually by Standard & Poor's (S&P) Equity Research, the world's leading provider of independent investment research.

The eight companies include China Construction Bank, China Mengniu Dairy, China Oilfield Services, China Southern Airlines, Datang International Power, Henderson Land Development, Hutchison Telecommunications and AU Optronics.

Lorraine Tan, vice president of equity research at S&P Asia, said the eight companies in China were chosen for their unique position, potential and growth.



## VIP sedans cross the finish line

FAW-Volkswagen presents an Audi A8 sedan, with painted-on sports figures, to the organizing committee for the 2008 Olympics as a designated VIP sedan yesterday in Beijing.

Over 1,000 Audi cars, including Audi A8L,

Audi Q7 and Audi A6L, will be used as VIP sedans throughout the two-week 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, Liu Jun, deputy director of BOCOG Marketing Department, said.

CFP Photo

## Silk Street Market considers Taipei branch

Beijing, January 18 (San Francisco Bay Guardian) – The Silk Street Market in Beijing, also known as the Xiushui Market, is considering opening an outlet in Taiwan, local media reported.

The Beijing Xiushui Clothing Co Ltd was planning to cooperate with Taiwan businesses to set up a new Xiushui Market in Taipei, said Zhang Yongping, a senior executive of the company.

The market would cover about 100,000 square meters with mainly local goods, and stall holders would be local business people.

"Taiwan has plenty of special local products, snacks and crafts

that would be very appropriate for the development of Xiushui Market," he said.

A few cities outside the Chinese mainland, including Istanbul and some African cities, had already expressed interest in opening a Xiushui Market outlet, but the company was concentrating on Taipei.

However, he declined to give details such as the company's partner, investment, planned location and timetable for a Taipei market, saying the plan was still under discussion.

Xiushui Market has been popular since 1985, with overseas tourists who have flocked to buy

cheap but high quality clothes and accessories.

Surrounded by foreign embassies and luxury hotels in the Chaoyang District, the market is described as the third best-known tourist destination in the capital after the Palace Museum and the Great Wall.

Asked if the reputation of selling fake brand-name products would have a negative influence on its Taipei plans, Zhang said, "It will not bring about any bad effect."

"Taipei's Xiushui Market will mainly sell local products and will be subject to local laws and regulations," he said.

## Carrefour appoints new China CEO

By Zhao Hongyi

Carrefour appointed Eric Legros as its China president and CEO this week, replacing the retired Jean-Luc Chereau.

Legros, 47, joined Carrefour in 1994 and worked in Carrefour headquarters, Spain and Argen-

tina, where he focused on purchasing and logistics.

"We'll continue to localize our business, perfect our services and polish our brand here," Legros told Beijing media this week.

Chereau will continue to work as the China business advisor and

focus on introducing Europe's food security management system and his experience to China.

Carrefour has 92 hypermarkets in 34 Chinese cities. In Beijing, it has seven hypermarkets and is set to open another three this year.

## China pulls in US\$63 billion FDI

Beijing, January 18 (Reuters) – China drew a record US\$63 billion in foreign direct investment in 2006, up five percent from US\$60.33 billion in 2005.

Investment overseas by Chinese firms rose to US\$16.1 billion, 32 percent from a year earlier.

Beijing has been encouraging its companies to invest abroad to secure resources, build brands and win market share.

## China's tourism market expands

Beijing, January 18 (PTI) – China received a record 124 million travelers in 2006 and has become the fourth major inbound tourism market in the world, according to statistics released by China National Tourism Administration (CNTA).

China reaped US\$33.5 billion in tourism income last year, ranking sixth in the world.

Officials from CNTA said inbound tourism will continue to increase in the next few years.

The Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 and the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 will attract more travelers from around the world, the CNTA said.

## Commercial center invites business

By Zhao Hongyi

The Airport International Center, neighboring the Beijing Capital International Airport, started this week to invite international airlines, aviation companies and relevant enterprises to set up business and offices.

The center is an aviation industry-oriented complex. Airport officials hope international companies make the center their bases for Far East, Asia and Pacific business expansion, flight coordination, R&D and facilities testing centers.

## EMI, Baidu team up for music service

New York/Beijing, January 17 (Reuters) – Chinese Internet search service Baidu.com Inc said it was launching an advertising-supported free Chinese-language online music service in mainland China with Britain's EMI Music.

EMI and Baidu would also continue to explore developing an advertising-supported service for downloading music, the companies said.

## Soho China pushes IPO plan

Hong Kong, January 18 (Bloomberg) – Soho China, a property developer in Beijing, has hired Goldman Sachs and HSBC to revive a initial public offering in Hong Kong, targeting at raising US\$400 million by June to finance new projects.

In 2002, Soho China delayed a US\$250 million initial public offering in Hong Kong and the United States because of a disagreement between the arranger Goldman Sachs and other advisers involved in the sale over its profit outlook.



# TV presenter urges Starbucks to go

## Bad-boy author Wang returns

Wang Shuo, the eighties and nineties bad-boy of Chinese literature and one-time 'spiritual pollutant,' will be on the cover of this issue of *Life Week*, according to well-known blogger Wang Xiaofeng, who works for the influential weekly magazine.

So if Wang Shuo is back, what's he up to? Wang Xiaofeng's not telling, not even in a recent follow-up post, in which he may or may not have interviewed eight hours and thirteen thousand characters worth of Wang Shuo's cohorts from his heyday almost a decade ago.

According to Wang Shuo's Wikipedia entry, he has written five screenplays since his last novel was published in 2000, and not much else. Wang Shuo was mentioned on journalist-blogger Zhao Mu's blog space late last month, with the news that the writer has plans to open a pay-per-view blog, making him the first mainstream blogger to do so.

Wang Shuo had a Sina celebrity blog, but hasn't updated it since March last year. He currently has a blog of sorts at Flower Village, where he posts only his latest works piece-by-piece. Opened since November 17 last year, it can currently be read for free.

Will pay-per-read blogs become a trend? Will they have a serious impact on traditional publishing, or even replace it, and become a mainstream model?

(Source: Global Voices Online)



Some lament the presence of a Starbucks in the Forbidden City, others feel it's fine.

CFP Photo

By Huang Daohen

The opening of a Starbucks outlet in the Forbidden City, China's former Imperial Palace, generated more debate on whether it's a threat to China's cultural integrity.

This new round of heated argument was sparked by a TV personality who wrote on his new blog last Friday that the presence of the coffee shop is a "trashing of Chinese culture."

Rui Chenggang, the controversial presenter of an English program on CCTV, said in his blog that the outlet humiliates Chinese culture.

"All I want is for Starbucks to move

out of the Forbidden City peacefully. We'll continue enjoying Starbucks elsewhere in the city," Rui said.

Foreigners, Rui wrote in his blog, are more likely than Chinese to be offended by the presence of Starbucks in the Forbidden City, and the outlet has been a laughingstock in Western society.

"The outlet should be as unwelcome in the Forbidden City as it would be at the Taj Mahal in India, the Pyramids in Egypt or the Louvre Museum in Paris," Rui added.

Rui recalled meeting Jim Donald, Starbucks Chairman and CEO, at the 2006

Yale CEO Leadership Summit. Rui suggested he withdraw the outlet. Donald told Rui in a letter later published on Rui's blog that the company has been constantly involved in heritage protection since it was invited to open the store six years ago, and will try its best to fit within the surrounding environment.

Similarly, a KFC outlet which had been operating in Beijing's ancient imperial garden, Beihai Park, was told that its lease would not be renewed in 2003, after their ten-year contract ran out. Park officials believe KFC doesn't fit the imperial garden landscape.



Wang Shuo was a major figure in China's literary scene in the 1980s and 90s.

CFP Photo

## Comments:

We have always shown respect for the traditional culture of the Forbidden City. The company has treated the outlet as special and made serious efforts to fit into the environment there.

We removed the small outdoor sign at the outlet last year. The appearance of this tiny outlet is similar to surrounding buildings, giving no indication that it houses a Starbucks.

As for withdrawing, we still haven't considered that, since we have a contract with the Forbidden City Museum.

— Wen Yideng,  
vice president of Starbucks China  
(Source: The Beijing News)

The museum has now been negotiating with Starbucks. We are trying to figure out how best to deal with this issue within the first half of this year.

However, opening a Starbucks in the Forbidden City was in itself an attempt to improve the environment and service facilities. We decided to add this outlet because there is almost no place to buy drinks in the Forbidden City or nearby.

— Feng Naien,  
Forbidden City Museum spokesman  
(Source: Beijing Morning Post)

I still haven't had the chance to try the Forbidden City outlet. It probably shouldn't be there.

However, it's no big deal for me. I'm glad there is one because I like drinking their coffee.

— Jeff Bass, a foreign student  
I have never been to a coffee shop, so from my perspective, I'm not in a position to have a view on this issue.

— Ren Xianwen, local resident  
If there were no people drinking coffee at the door, I wouldn't have realized that it was a coffee shop. I think it needs a sign.

— Rick, a tourist  
The outlet does not ruin the atmosphere. Instead, I think it shows that China is more connected with the outside world.

— Li Zhen, a tourist

## Comments from Rui's blog:

To date, Rui's personal Sina blog on the matter attracted 543,312 page views and 2,488 responses. Though many of the comments are nationalistic calls for the removal of the Starbucks outlet, there are other voices, too.

So far as I know, most western countries, like the United States, have big China towns, why can't the Forbidden City take in one small coffee outlet?

Worldwide human heritage should be a place where a wide range of cultures

intermingle. Pu Yi, the last emperor of China, even rode a bicycle in the Forbidden City. If there were a Starbucks then, I am sure he would have pedaled over to taste the coffee.

— Daoke  
Starbucks coffee chain, just like McDonald's restaurants, are fast food eateries in the United States. It's odd to see them at historical attractions with a strong Chinese cultural flavor. It's a shock! This would never happen in the United States.

— Lemon

Everything has appropriate and inappropriate locations. Why not have a coffee outlet in the Forbidden City? It's quite small and inconspicuous. I don't think it will affect the overall environment.

— samira  
It is ridiculous! Opening a Starbucks outlet in the royal palace? It has really damaged the image of our cultural heritage. The palace is a symbol of China's traditional civilization. The image should not be tarnished — even in the slightest.

— alicia

## Comments:

If Wang Shuo really charges to read his blog, I'd be willing to pay. We've been watching him for so many years, there's good stuff to see. Though there are lots of blogs online, but there are only a few with writing of Wang's quality.

— ahang  
There's bound to be lots of unauthorized versions of Wang Shuo's pay-blog. There's no need to give him money!

— rock  
I only pay to read the Economist. Who's Wang Shuo, anyway?

— mona  
It might work in theory, but it's not realistic in practice. Internet writing just gets copied and pasted elsewhere. Nobody's willing to pay. What's more, everyone else is free. His being the only blog to charge will put people off.

— fishabcoo  
Why read a pay-per-view blog when there are hundreds (maybe more) of good free blogs? And also, there are millions of boring or bad ones to entertain yourself with in between times.

— am Jenn  
(By Huang Daohen)



# Star couple gives lessons to Beijing athletes

By Jackie Zhang

Jackie Joyner-Kersey, world-famous heptathlon champion and medalist of six Olympic Games, came to Beijing, Monday, with her husband and coach, Bob Kersey, to give Chinese athletes and coaches four days of training on the long jump and triple jump.

The couple came to share their experience through demo lessons. "The training lessons focused on speed and strength training, recovery plans for competitions, psychological work and how to prevent injury and illness," Kersey said.

On the Wednesday lesson, Kersey trained his student, a young female athlete he brought from America, on speed, jump and strength. He pointed out her mistakes and gave her suggestions. Chinese coaches and athletes stood together on one side to watch the American-style training lessons, and to occasionally ask questions.

"Some coaches told me the lessons were really beneficial," Yang Jimin, a staff member at the General Sports Administration of China, said. "We've learned many new training methods from Kersey. The coaches and athletes selected to participate in the demonstration training are the best in China. It's great practice for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games."

Unfortunately, Joyner-Kersey only stayed in Beijing one day. "She returned to the United States on Tuesday to appear in her foundation's establishment ceremony," Kersey said.

Kersey said this was his third time in Beijing since last August, and that he enjoyed his days and was impressed by the enthusiasm of the Chinese athletes and coaches.

"They are enthusiastic about finding new ways to improve their training. I think it's not a matter of which way is correct. Different people just adopt different methods."



Multiple olympic champion joyner-Kersey and her coach husband shared techniques with Chinese athletes at a four-day training camp in Beijing. Photos by Tian Yufeng

## Key words illustrate foreign students focuses last year

By Gan Tian

'Ten key words of 2006' was released last Friday by the National Language Resources Tracing and Research Center and Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU). The list reviews the most important events to happen in China's ten fields last year. Several words were chosen to represent focused topics among Beijing expats.

'Africa-Sino Forum' is one of the events in the Comprehensive Catalogue, as it marked a new relationship between China and Africa. 'Foreign invested bank' was selected for the Economic Catalogue to reflect the growth of foreign banks. The hottest Internet topics, like 'creative business,' 'Confucius,' 'hidden rules' (*qian guize*) and 'parody,' made it into the Culture Catalogue. However, expats in the city were most interested in the Sports Catalogue with the Olympic Games drawing near. The 'Bird's nest' and 'Water Cube' were frequently discussed.

The catalogue focuses mainly on Chinese, and aims to provide a vivid picture of the frequently mentioned events. The *Beijing Youth Daily* has been one target newspaper cataloged since 2002. This year, words recorded on the Internet are also being selected.

However, Sam Taylor, a student at BLCU, thought it would be a good idea to have an English list of the key words focusing on expat life. "Some words we really care about, but some we don't. I wish the organization would list the words to let us know what was important in the last year. What's worse, I'm worried about whether these words will appear on the HSK."

"They reflect every part of society, but don't appear in the test," Zhang Kai, a teacher in the HSK Center, said.

## Frenchwoman raises money for lama for kidney

By Jiang Xubo

A young Frenchwoman, Aline Guibert, is raising money to save her friend Timba Jiatso, 33, a lama in a Gansu lamasery, who is suffering from renal failure.

"It's horrible that a human being may die, not because there was no kidney available for transplant, but because he couldn't afford it," Guibert, currently a French teacher in Lanzhou Jiaotong University, said.

Jiatso, a lama at the Labuleng Lamasery, is in stable condition since his treatment at the Lanzhou University Second Hospital resumed a few weeks ago. He's now waiting for a kidney and further treatment, thanks to donations from France and several Chinese cities, including Beijing and Chengdu.

"Timba was in serious condition when he entered our hospital: he had several complications including heart failure and pneumonia. Now he's improved, and the tissue matching test for the transplant could come as early as next week," Xia Yanling, Timba's attending doctor, said.

Xia said Timba's transplant would cost as much as 200,000 yuan (US\$25,700).

Donations surged after Guibert came to the capital in mid-December to contact Action Francophone International (AFI), a France-based charity, for help. Since AFI's Beijing office launched their donation drive, as much as 200,000 yuan (US\$25,700) was donated as of Wednesday, with a donation of 150,000 yuan (US\$19,200) from an anonymous woman. AFI said it is considering discontinuing the drive.

After a November relapse, Timba, who has suffered from renal failure since 2004, considered quitting treatments after the last several years met no success.

Guibert, a Buddhist culture enthusiast, made friends with the lama after her visits to the local lamasery.

## Luc Besson reneges on '10 film' promise



Luc Besson

CFP Photo

By Han Manman

Despite the disordered organization, noisy hall, bad microphones, small voice translator, Luc Besson still won bellows of laughter from the media for his humorous, childish antics, Tuesday, in a news conference for his new film *Arthur and the Minimoys*, which starts airing in China today.

Besson arrived half-an-hour late for his conference and was immediately showered by camera flashes. After posing a few seconds, Besson jokingly asked, "Finished? OK, see you!" Then, pretended to leave.

When people believed this new film would be Luc Besson's last, since he once promised to only make ten films in his life, Besson took back his word. He admitted that since it's been a box office smash in Europe, he said he plants to

shoot another.

"I am not a politician and never signed any agreement to only make ten films. I'm an artist: I have a right to change my mind and run off at the mouth," Besson said with a smile.

Talking about the Chinese film, Besson said that he just bought the French copyright to the Chinese film *Crazy Stone*. "It's a perfect 'black humor' film," he said.

When one reporter commented that his film reflected more and more of Hollywood's style, Besson disagreed and was visibly angry and said, "I've insisted on making localized film for 30 years and have always fought to not be assimilated into Hollywood-style. Even if it's cost me many chances to make more money, it's been my heart's pride. If anyone says this new film feels like Hollywood, then I'm sorry, but I really disagree with that."

"Some said I made the film just to open a new market and I had strong business ambitions. I guess if I make a film about Iceland, no one will doubt me since few people live there," he said.

Many view Besson as a 'cool guy,' but his words reflect his childish heart. He has a curiosity for anything new. If he saw a bee fly past him, Besson might observe it for two hours. "I wonder if the bee hates

his life. What are his dreams? Or does he just want to fall in love with a female bee and keep a loyal heart for his girlfriend?"

For his new film, Besson said he's not expecting the film to make great box office returns in China. "It's my first public showing in China, so I'm proud my film could be one of the 20 overseas films imported," he said.

"I hope Chinese parents take their children to see the film, since it is full of love and very humorous," he said.

Besson said the boy, Arthur, is 50 percent like himself. "Many children have shared my experience of being separated from their parents or having to lose them. It was a great pain, and deeply influenced my future."

The movie is an adaptation of his best selling novel *Arthur and the Minimoys*. It's about a 10-year-old boy named Arthur. In a bid to save his grandfather's house from demolition, he goes searching for the fabled hidden treasure in the land of the Minimoys, a tiny people who live in harmony with nature.

It's been very successful in Europe since its December release in France. The movie cost Besson over four years of his life and a budget of US\$84.26 million – the highest in the history of French cinema.



# China, EU officially launch talks on PCA

China and the European Union (EU) announced on Wednesday the official launch of talks on a new pact, an apparent effort from the two sides to reinforce their strategic partnership.

The announcement of the launch of the Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was made at a joint press conference presided over by Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and visiting EU coun-

terpart Benita Ferrero-Waldner.

"The agreement will provide a comprehensive basis covering the whole range of the political, economic and trade relationship between China and the European Union," Waldner, the EU Commissioner for External Relations and Neighborhood Policy, said.

She said that the new agreement would cover 22 sectors, including energy, environment, trade and

human rights.

In September 2006 in Helsinki, the EU and China agreed to launch talks on the PCA to update the 1985 Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement, which currently constitutes the legal basis governing EU-China relations.

Waldner said that the new pact would reflect all the changes in the bilateral relationship since 1985.

"We should continue to increase

political dialogue to actively expand and deepen bilateral cooperation in trade, science and technology, agriculture and education, and properly handle any differences that arise between the two sides," Li said.

Waldner noted that the PCA would provide an overall foundation for the development of bilateral political, economic and trade relations. **(Source: Xinhua)**

## France launches new scholarship for Chinese students

By Zhao Hongyi

The French Embassy, on behalf of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, joined Thales Group, the aviation electronic giant, in launching a new scholarship this week to assist Chinese students to study in France.

Under the scheme, eight students from China will receive no less than €10,000 grants each year from Thales, full social and medical insurance coverage from the French government, a designated tutor service from Thales and a paid internship in the group.

Qualified students will receive free French language training at the French Embassy in Beijing, if needed, before departing for their target school in France.

Applicants must be graduates of Tsinghua University, Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Fudan University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, Tongji University, Harbin Institute of Technology, Zhejiang University or Northwest Polytechnic University.

The applicants will be sent to member schools of ParisTech, HEC and the l'ESSEC groups.

The project started last May and has received 21 students from India, China and Russia.

Both the embassy and Thales promise to loosen the criteria on applicants and cover more students in the years to come.

Last year, nearly 9,000 Chinese students were studying in France. French President Jacques Chirac said, during his Beijing visit last October, he wants the number to double in the next few years.

The application deadline is February 28. Interested students can log on to [thalesgroup.com/academia](http://thalesgroup.com/academia) for more details and to [ambafrance-cn.org](http://ambafrance-cn.org) to download the application form.

You can also write to [bourse@cefcchina.org](mailto:bourse@cefcchina.org) or [Cecile.labarde@thalesgroup.com.cn](mailto:Cecile.labarde@thalesgroup.com.cn) for more information.

## UNICEF launches Chinese website

By Han Manman

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched its Chinese-language website this Monday, bringing information about HIV/AIDS prevention, girls' education, bird flu, child protection and other related issues to more than 140 million Chinese Internet users worldwide.

In addition to information about UNICEF programs in China, the website also provides users access to video reports, press materials and news stories from around the globe.

The launch of the website is particularly timely given the rapid increase in the number of Chinese-speaking Internet users, who now make up more than 13 percent of the world's one billion. "It's important to reach out to the fastest growing group of Internet users to help them understand the challenges facing children," Stephen Cassidy, UNICEF's Chief of Internet, Broadcast and Image section, said.

The debut of the Chinese web site also marks the fifth in a series of UNICEF global language web sites, joining Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

According to UNICEF, there are 120 million Internet users in China alone, where UNICEF continues to run programs to fight infant and maternal mortality, and HIV/AIDS, as well as programs protecting street children, migrant children and those from ethnic minority groups.

## Italian Bond girl, ambassador bring Italian films to Beijing



Cucinotta (left), Trinca (middle) and Magnani (right)

Photo provided by Cinecitta

By Gan Tian

One of the hottest Italian actresses, Maria Grazia Cucinotta, attended Italian Ambassador Riccardo Sessa's press conference to introduce 'Italiana - Cinema Explores Italia' in Beijing, Wednesday. The actress brought her experience and understanding of Italian films to Beijing.

Cucinotta dropped by in an elegant black dress to promote the 'Italiana' activity. When asked what her favorite role has been, she cleverly said she couldn't choose one since she put all her effort and passion into each. In 1999, Maria surprised the world as a Bond girl in *The World Is*

*Not Enough*. She solidified her acting career with a lead role in the 1994 international hit *Il Postino*. The film was nominated for four Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

The Ambassador explained Italian films, and said, "I hope everyone can know more about Italy through these thirty films, as they represent Italian culture, people, geography quite well."

The 'Italiana' film festival is the end project for "The Year of Italy in China" launched by Italian Foreign Affairs and Culture Ministries. Thirty well-praised movies have been selected for screening in Beijing and Shang-

hai the next two weeks. After its China trip, 'Italiana' will go to Spain, France, the US and Latin American countries.

The famous Italian artist Ugo Nespolo, the president of Cinema Direction of Italian Ministry of National Heritage and Culture Gaetana Blandini, CEO of Cinecitta Holding Francesco Carducci Arsenio and new film stars Jasmine Trinca and Olivia Magnani also attended the press conference.

The films in 'Italiana' began screening at the New Century Cinema in Oriental Plaza, APM Cinema and the China Film Archive on Wednesday.

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## English



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# Villages suffer from low birth registration

By Chen Shasha

A birth registration intervention project begun in 2005 by Plan China, an international development organization in Qishan County, Shaanxi province, ended its first phase last Saturday. Plan China's reports show that in some Chinese villages, no girls at all are registered at birth.

Registration of birth is an official record of a person's existence. If a child isn't registered, he or she may not be able to receive a *hukou* or residence permit. Without a *hukou*, a child won't have a legal name or nationality, won't be able to legally enter school or take national exams, won't receive legal protection in cases such as child labor, military service or kidnapping. "It is the first and most fundamental right of Chinese children," James Murray, country director of Plan China, said.

According to 'The Legislation on Household Registration of PRC,' a child should be registered within 30 days after birth. However, for various reasons, more than 30 percent of children under five are unregistered in China, Chen Hongle, organizer of the project, said.

## Cause of failure

According to Chen, the current problem is a general lack of awareness: hospital leaders, family planning departments, registry departments and parents have little knowledge of birth registration or protection of children's rights. However, the situation is not that simple. "More than 70 percent of villagers feel the registration too costly and complicated," Francesca Celestre, communications and public relations specialist of Plan



Plan China working in Shaanxi Province

Photo provided by Plan China

China, said.

Registration application currently requires the following documents: medical birth certificate, family planning service booklet or birth certificate, and parent's household booklet or resident identity cards. In rural China, a certificate from the village committee is also needed.

Since 1996, medical birth certificates have been produced by the Ministry of Public Health and granted to children by hospitals or institutions where the child was born. But the number of hospitals that can give medical birth certificates is low, especially in rural areas. "For example, in Qishan's 20 hospitals, only seven in central areas have the right, which is inconvenient for people

living far away," Chen said.

China's family planning policy states that mothers-to-be need to obtain a birth certificate before giving birth. However, a woman with more than one child won't get a birth certificate until the corresponding fines have been levied – another cause of failure to register. More than 25 percent of babies born in such circumstances do not get a birth registration.

On top of this, the 'village committee admission' isn't easy to get. "Some village committees will ask parents to pay extra fees or taxes, and those who don't will not get a BR when the child is born," Chen said.

Local public security department fees in some rural areas is another reason that hinders BR.

"The charges vary, with the highest rates going beyond 50 yuan," Chen said.

## Hopeful signs

Since the Plan China project began, the procedure for obtaining a birth certificate has become simpler. "Now parents don't have to get the village committee's admission or a birth certificate," Chen said. Within a year, registration has increased by 30-70 percent in the five places in Qishan where the project was carried out.

"This birth registration project has demonstrated to the entire country that birth registration can become universal and achievable," James Murray said.

However, Qishan is just one place and there are still many areas in China with registration problems.

## Work without pay is okay



Dawson discusses issues with local staff.

Photo provided by Modern Plaza

By Gan Tian

Mariah Dawson, a French exchange student from the University of Lyon, got up early last Sunday. After washing up, she hurried to Modern Plaza in Zhongguancun – not to shop, but to work as a volunteer guide.

Mariah, who is studying Chinese at the Beijing Foreign Studies University, has been a volunteer at the mall's Foreign Guest Reception since the start of this year. She's one of their two

foreign volunteers.

Fluent in French, English, Spanish and now learning Chinese, her job is to help foreign visitors by providing them with useful information. At the same time, she gives language lessons to Modern Plaza's staff.

When asked why she decided to do volunteer work, she replied without hesitation, "While I'm here in China learning its language and culture, it's better to have work experience. Learning

is part of working."

"My colleagues are really nice. Though our cultures may be different, they're very warm toward me," she said. "I've made a lot of friends here. I even went to the Summer Palace with my colleagues on Tuesday."

Mariah thinks highly of volunteering. "For me, a salary is not very important. What's more beneficial is to exchange experiences and get to know other cultures."

## German expert talks about energy efficiency

By He Jianwei

"I think it is very important to promote investments for energy efficiency and renewable energy all over the world," Elizabeth Wilson, a climate change and UK-China sustainable development officer from the Department for International Development (DFID) China said.

Markus Schwegler, a German expert at the Administrative Centre for China's Agenda 21

(ACCA21), cited some reports on climate changes in China during his lecture last Tuesday, entitled "Introducing the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and International Carbon Trade – Promoting investments for energy efficiency and renewable energy through carbon financing in China."

In his speech, Schwegler emphasized the risks of climate change. "The scientific evidence

is now overwhelming: climate change presents very serious global risks, and it demands an urgent global response. The recently published Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change unequivocally states that we, as the international community, must err on the side of caution."

He also talked about the barriers, potential and opportunities for the development of CDM in China to a group of more than

20 listeners, including journalists and officers from international organizations.

"I think that these lectures are a wonderful opportunity to ask questions and find out more about environmental topics that are often complicated and difficult to understand. I would recommend anyone to visit CESDRRC if they would like to find out more about sustainable development and the environment,"

## Events

### Supper honoring Robert Burns

An evening of poetry, prose, song and haggis to celebrate the birthday of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns. The Bookworm takes a more informal approach to the traditional festivities, with a range of literary performances served alongside the classic Burns supper. All nationalities are welcome, but remember to book a table in advance.

Where: The Bookworm, Building 4, Nan Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang

When: January 26, 7:30pm

Cost: 200 yuan per person

Email:

bookwormjenny@gmail.com

### Baby crawling contest

Sign up to participate in the "Baby Steeplechase" crawling contest for babies 8-14 months old. Learn more about your baby's first steps in life. Physicians will be on-site for Q&A.

Where: New Century International Children's Hospital, No 56 Nanlishi Lu, Xicheng

When: January 20, 9:30-11:30am

Cost: Free

Tel: 8804 6234

### Expat life in Beijing

This fun and relaxed seminar will cover a range of topics pertaining to expat life in Beijing. Come for a goody bag, if nothing else.

Where: Beijing City International School, No 77 Baizhuan Nan Er Lu, Chaoyang

When: January 23, 10am-noon

Admission: Free

Tel: 8771 7171

Email:

ingrid.obrien@bcis.cn

More information: bcis.cn

### Lecture: China, Five Years after WTO

Long Yongtu, a chief negotiator during China's bid to enter the World Trade Organization, will give a brief presentation on the country's status after five years of WTO membership. The event is sponsored by the Swedish Chamber of Commerce.

Where: Ballroom 1, Radisson SAS Hotel Beijing, No 6A Beisanhuan Dong Lu, Chaoyang

When: January 25, 8-9:30am

Admission: 150 yuan for members; 200 for non-members

Tel: 5922 3388 ext 313

Email:

beijing@swedishchamber.com.cn

(By He Jianwei)



# It's skating season!



Skating has long been a popular winter pursuit on the city's many lakes.

Photo by Luo Wei

By Gan Tian

There's an old saying about the Beijing winter, "You won't be able to go bare-handed outdoor in the first and second nine-days after winter solstice; you can walk on ice for the next eighteen days; you can enjoy willow trees blooming in the fifth and sixth nine-days; the ice melts on the seventh nine-days and swallows come back in the eighth." Now is the time when you can walk – and glide – on ice!

## Enjoy the outdoors

**Weiminghu:** You can skate for free on Peking University's Weiminghu lake. There are many stands around it that rent out skating boots for ten yuan per hour. Andrew Walson from Beijing Language and Culture University often goes there. "It reminds you of youth and carefree days," he said.

**Qianhai:** Qianhai lake in Shishahai, Xicheng District opened for skating early this month. Pay ten yuan per hour from Monday to Friday, and fifteen yuan on weekends and holidays. There are skat-

ing boots for rent at 20 yuan, with a 200-yuan deposit. Call 6612 7652 for more information.

**Beihai Park:** The park charges 15 yuan per hour from Monday to Sunday for skating and boot rental. Deposit for the boots is 50 yuan. Service stands are by the four gates. Call 6403 1103 for more information.

**Zizhuyuan Park:** Located in Haidian district's Zizhuyuan Park, ice-skating on this lake began last Saturday; 15 yuan for every two hours. Call 6842 5851 for more information.

**Zhongshan Park:** There won't be any ice skating at Zhongshan Park this year, because the ice is deemed not thick enough. But you can enjoy their 'skating chairs' for ten to twenty yuan per hour.

## Indoor fun

Compared with outdoor skating, indoor rinks provide better service. Many of the aspiring middle class prefer these, because they're less crowded and noisy.

**World Trade Center:** The World Trade Center has a skating rink on its underground third floor, a pretty popular place among employees in the CBD area. Price varies depending on when you go (charged every 90 minutes): 30 yuan before 6pm, Monday to Friday; 40 yuan from 6-9pm, Monday to Thursday; 50 yuan for Friday night and weekends. Fur-lined skating boots for rent at 10 yuan for 90 minutes, with a 300-yuan deposit. Call 6505 5776 for more information.

**New World Shopping Center:** Chongwenmen's New World Shopping Center provides good service at cheap prices. This is a favorite among students. Rates are for every 90 minutes. From Monday to Friday before 11:30am, 25 yuan; from 11:30am-5pm, 35 yuan; 5-9pm, 40 yuan; weekends, 45 yuan. Call 6708 9523 for more information.

**Others:** Xidan's 77th Street mall, Capital Stadium and Ditan. Price ranges from 50-90 yuan for 90 minutes.

## Tips and flips

1. Follow the rink's safety instructions. If you're on a lake, never go beyond the designated skating area. That spells danger.
2. When you fall down (and everybody does), get right back up and keep skating.
3. Stand as tall as you can and hold your head up high.
4. Try not to look down at your feet. Instead, look in front of you in the direction that you're going.
5. Keep your feet under your hips; don't lean over your skates too much.
6. Hold your arms out in front of you (like a hug) and open them wide. This will help you stay balanced.
7. Bend your knees!
8. When you turn, learn to use the edges of your skates.
9. Stretch your legs in the air as you skate along, and point your toes, like a dancer, as you step off the ice.
10. "Help! How do I stop?" It's easy: bend your knees, turn the toes of each foot in toward the other foot, point your heels out, and push out on your heels.

# Get behind the wheel!

## How foreigners can have a Chinese driver's license

By Chu Meng

Until recently, the only foreign driver's license accepted in China is Belgium's. Other license holders need to apply for a "transfer of driving license" – a process that most foreigners find puzzling.

Here are the requirements for obtaining a People's Republic of China driver's license in Beijing. *Beijing Today* has collected practical tips from the Public Security Bureau's Vehicle Management Section in order to make the process less painful.

## Requirements

- Passport and a photocopy.
- Valid driver's licenses from your home country plus a photocopy. Your license must be



Expats applying for a Chinese driving license

Photo by Cai Xiaoyu

authenticated overseas by an embassy or consulate of the People's Republic of China, representative office, liaison office or other office duly authorized by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- A Chinese translation of your license: before flying to China, take your valid driver's licenses to be translated in the embassy or

consulate of the People's Republic of China. You have to fill out a Driver's Application Form, which you can get at the Vehicle Management Section Office.

- Official "physical examination certificate for driving license application" from a public hospital or health office.

- Two photos, black and white or colored, with you facing the camera (without a hat). It should be 3cm by 2.5cm, and taken within the past six months.

## NOTES

• Those who hold a valid foreign driver's license and who have a Chinese Residence Certificate for Foreigners valid for more than one year may apply for a non-professional driving license for

the same type of vehicle within one year of entry to China. These people won't need to pass a driving test on the principles of equality and reciprocity.

- Rules for applying for a Chinese driver's license are based on the principles of equality and reciprocity.

• A foreign resident's Chinese driver's license is valid for the same period as his or her Alien Residence Certificate. Before the license expires, the person must first extend the period of legal residence, then apply for an extension of the license at an appropriate Motor Vehicle Office. However, the accumulated period of validity for a driver's license cannot exceed six years.

## ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: [weiyiing@ynet.com](mailto:weiyiing@ynet.com)

**1 Where can I get locally-made cheese, and is it even worth trying?**

You can get locally-made cheese from any supermarket or convenience store. They don't taste as strong as European cheese, but are also not as expensive.

**2 Beijing Today published information about food delivery services last week. But when I called Carrefour, they said they do not deliver food. What's this about?**

Carrefour provides free delivery for purchases worth at least 200 yuan – but within a certain distance from the store. However, the supermarket said they don't deliver fresh fruit, vegetables or meat.

**3 What do Chinese normally have for breakfast and where can I go to try it out?**

The typical breakfast for a Beijinger includes salted pork buns, porridge, Chinese twisted doughnut, *doujiang* (soy milk) and *jidai jianbing* (fried egg and sliced ham in a pancake). Local communities normally have a breakfast stand called *bianmin zaocan*. A similar breakfast, though at a higher price, is available at Chinese fast food chain Yonghe Dawang. Many Chinese families, on the other hand, prefer getting up early and preparing breakfast by themselves.

**4 Do you know where I can get Victoria's Secret lingerie in Beijing?**

Victoria's Secret hasn't opened a store in China yet, although a lot of their products are made locally. But you can find items with Victoria's Secret labels in small boutiques, especially around Kuanjiang in Dongcheng district. Shop owners claim these products come directly from Victoria's Secret factories.

**5 I've seen a lot of Chinese tell the person they're talking to that he or she is fat. Don't they think this is rude?**

In other countries, being called 'fat' may be insulting, but it's not regarded that way in China. Older people are usually the ones fond of making this comment. It may be taken as a compliment, meaning the person looks 'rounder,' likely because life has gotten better – more money, more food, less stress.

(By Wei Ying)





Huang Rui in his 'To drink tea' talk

By Jackie Zhang

"Choosing between years 1949 and 2009 and colors blue and red, blue representing Taiwan and red representing the Chinese mainland, which color and year do you prefer?"

"Blue and 1970."

"I've prepared two kinds of tea, Dahongpao from the Chinese mainland and Wulong from Taiwan. Which would you like to have?"

"Dahongpao."

This is a conversation between Huang Rui, a contemporary artist from 798 Art District, and Yi Jiezhong, a board of director of the Flamingo Consultancy. This exchange opened their 'art talk' on Tuesday, titled 'To Drink Tea,' the eighth in a series that will continue tomorrow. The performance is part of the 'Open' exhibition organized by Huang.

Last November, the maintenance center of 798 Art District sent Huang a notice requiring him to vacate his studio before Wednesday last week, then refused to communicate with him on the subject of reletting the studio.

Last Tuesday, Huang opened his private studio for a public exhibit and began a dialogue with various artists. "I hope more people will know about this issue, and through my talks, pay more attention to the artists and the management of 798," he said.

Huang explained the talk's theme. "To drink tea" is a Zen idiom. The Monk Zhaozhou (778-897) was one of the most famous monks of the Tang Dynasty. One day, a man paid a visit to the monk. The monk asked him, 'Have you been here before?' The man said yes. Then, the monk said, go drink tea. Then, another man came. The monk asked him the same question. The man answered no. The monk again said, go drink tea. The abbot of the temple standing next to the monk grew curious and asked him why he kept saying 'go drink tea.' The monk replied, 'Go drink tea.' In Zen philosophy, the statement meant breaking down barriers among people, seeing them as equals and living according to destiny.

"I like Zen very much. The reason for choosing it as the theme is that I want to reach a solution with the maintenance center by sitting down and calmly discussing the issue. We don't need to be in a hurry to find a solution. What's important is to let oneself calmly consider everything, then letting things take their natural course," Huang said, "The series talk will give people – the artists talking with me and the visitors watching it – a chance to learn from others and to think about themselves."

People are likely to focus on conflicts, seldom thinking about their cause. "I think everyone should learn to think about an issue by thinking about different aspects of it, and to draw inferences from the case."



Huang Rui

Photos by Tian Yufeng

# To dr

January 9 Relationship  
commercial

**With Robert Bernell, manager of Time Zone 8 Art Books**

**Huang Rui:** What do you think are the differences between running your art bookstore in Beijing's 798 Art District and Moganshan district in Shanghai?

**Robert Bernell:** There are two key points in 798. One is the Dashanzi Art Festival and the other is bookstores and galleries. These stimulate thinking and give people a tool to explore contemporary art and society. I think the disadvantage of the Moganshan district is there's no art festival.

**Huang:** The contemporary art

January 10 Character

**With Tang Lei, an architect**

**Huang:** I heard your father participated in the planning and construction of 798.

**Cheng Lei:** Yes, it's true. The 798 factory was built in 1954. It was built with the assistance of the Soviet Union, and designed and constructed by German organizations. My father was one of the staff members of the Chinese partners.

I think 798 is now gestating a new life, the creative economy of the country. I have a parable to describe

January 11 Develop

**With Fei Jing, a professor from the School of Architecture, Tsinghua University; Zhu Jun, an architect; and Li Yanhua from the Li Jiacheng Foundation**

**Huang:** Today I want to talk about the start, the development and the changes in art districts. Soho in New York is a typical art district with many artists living there. I know that Fei Jing lived there a long time, and I have been there many times as well.

**Zhu Jun:** Soho used to be an industrial district. The New York government had strict rules saying that houses in industrial districts could engage only in industrial business. Most of the houses there were empty, so many artists went to live

January 16 City developm

**With Yi Jiezhong, a board of director of Flamingo Consultancy**

**Huang:** I know that you have a lot of concern for the city's problems. I've read your well-written articles and recently you published an article entitled 'City Ballet.' Can you share with us here some of what you wrote?

**Yi Jiezhong:** Ballet is a compelling art. When you go through ballet training, you'll learn to use strength

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# ink tea

between  
ism and art

market in China is getting more and more commercialized. Do you like the changes you see?

**Bernell:** Renowned painter Liu Xiaodong told me that people from both China and abroad, both friends and strangers, regard him as a mag-nate, a man whose paintings are worth tens of millions of yuans. They don't see his works for what they are, what he wants to express through them, but rather their cost. Commercializa-tion has advantages, but we need to control the speed of its development. We still need to return to the nature and essence of art.

## istics of 798

— a new life is to be born. the new life should grow on the basis of original objects, like his- and its continuation. There are many art districts nationwide and I think 798 is at the top. So far, 798 has the biggest Bau- architecture cluster in the d. It was built by Europeans, can be found in China. It repre- sents the Chinese industrial revolu- and is a platform for Chinese international contemporary art. The value of 798 is that whether

an artist is famous or not, he can work and develop himself here. Even the poor university graduate can come to 798 and work alongside top artists.

I also go to art museums, but they focus more on appearances — marble and copper decorations. 798 is different; you can exhibit Picas- so's works, and at the same time, it wouldn't be strange to ask a group of young people to create abstract paintings. It's in these contrasts that we see the best in 798.

## ment of art districts

there illegally since rent there was cheap. Then, the situation changed gradually. Artists were allowed to live in Soho. One similarity between Soho and 798 is that they were spon- taneously turned into art districts.

**Fei Jing:** Dashanzi used to be an industrial district. When people began putting up galleries, a cultural atmosphere developed. The modern planning concept is not to plan a district with several clear functions, but to integrate work, life and enter- tainment. Actually, the art district should be a humanistic district.

**Li Yanhua:** It's very interesting that Soho has attracted many socialists' attention. Some questions arose like how Soho became an art district from an impoverished

industrial district.

We can reflect on the 798 prob- lem by drawing on Soho's experi- ence. The conflict between artists and the Seven Star Group is actually the conflict between tenements and maintenance managers. By compar- ing 798 with Soho, we see that 798 can become a commercial district.

For an art district, the crucial question is who is in charge — artists or maintenance managers? What is the Seven Star Group doing in 798 now? Are their activi- ties reasonable? Art has played an important role in Soho's develop- ment, but the representation of art also changes along with the area's development. That's the problem that 798 faces now.

## ment

in different angles. It gets used to various move- ments. A group of people in different areas of a city living the same lifestyle. He has his or her own routine practices. This routine is a ballet. When two persons do the body ballet, then, they do the city ballet. It's just a matter of people going to the same time without any arrangements.

**Huang:** The city contains differ- ent types of city ballets. I think the beauty of the city is that it records the people's dance. However, cities, espe- cially Chinese cities, are in danger of erasing physical traces of the past. Do you think that Beijing can now make building preservation plans?

**Yi:** As far as I see, Beijing isn't wealthy enough to protect its old edi- fices. Taipei is not poor any more, but its old buildings have already been dismantled. There aren't any build-

ings more than 100 years old. The oldest architecture is the North Gate, which remains between two express- ways. In my opinion, whether or not to dismantle a building is a big prob- lem for a developing city. It's a form of sadness in developing countries.

**Huang:** These conflicts between poor and rich have made many gullies that cannot be filled. Is there any- thing, then, we can do to help? Or should we just have a cup of tea and do nothing?

In the midst of a dispute with 798 Art District landowners, artist Huang Rui is calmly seeking a solution through dialogue.



Huang Rui serving his guest a cup of tea



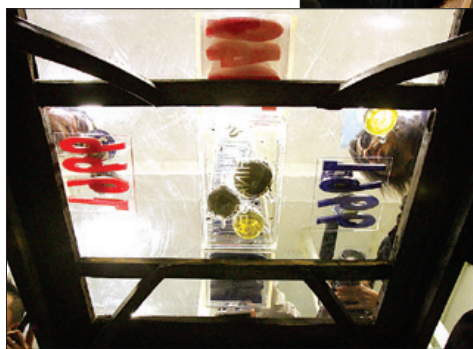
Teacups on the "year-number" teacup mat



Huang Rui and Yi Jiezhong talked about city development, Tuesday.



Huang Rui invited the audience to drink tea.



Huang Rui talked with Rober Bernell on January 9.





By Greg Iles  
528pp, Scribner, US\$15.57  
(Amazon.com)

Alexandra Morse, a woman FBI agent, has recently fallen out of favor with her federal overlords after a disastrous incident that left her scared and her coworker dead. The setup echoes another thriller's that starts with 'H' and ends with 'annibal'.

But stock setup is all this story shares.

Cast in the US's 'deep south', *True Evil*, Greg Iles's new thriller, combines two of the most terrifying evils in the modern world: germ warfare and lawyers.

In Iles's Mississippi, a rogue

scientist has developed a new virus that causes severe cancer, and ultimately a prolonged death over 18 months in anyone infected. The shady death dealer has teamed up with a crooked divorce lawyer to find the funds needed to convince the US government to buy his new super-weapon. Meanwhile, the lawyer has found a great scheme to generate those funds: providing divorce-seekers a mess-free way to get rid of their spouses.

Morse arrives in Mississippi to find her sister dying and her last words being that her husband murdered her. Now as the widower openly courts his

new mistress, Morse finds herself investigating the strange events without FBI approval. With the next victim known, the clock is ticking on whether she can stop the doctor and lawyer's plans.

Murder is usually a crime of hate, and waiting so long for your spouse to die is hardly ideal, but Morse points out, "A perfect murder is worth waiting for."

*True Evil* waltzes dangerously close to cliché with its cast of tried and true 'cat-and-mouse genre' characters, but the horror of the virus and its implications in a world where germ warfare is a real concern intrigue enough to carry the story.

# True Evil

## A World Collapsed

Once a rising star in the FBI, she (Morse) made a precipitous move in a hostage situation that got another agent killed. That her own face is half-riddled with scars after taking a bullet through a plate glass window is its own punishment, but she's reassigned from headquarters to Charlotte, Va, arriving in disgrace only a few weeks before being summoned to her sister's deathbed. It's the plight of her 10-year-old nephew, Jamie, forced to live with a father who is now openly courting his mistress, that causes Alex to at least take a closer look at her sister's accusation. Soon enough she uncovers a pattern that all but drives her underground as she pursues an investigation she must hide from her FBI overlords.

— Sheryl Connelly, *New York Daily News*

## The Clock is Ticking

More than that, she has identified the next victim, though Dr Chris Shepard has no reason to believe her when she first approaches him. He's living the dream in Natchez, Miss, with a thriving general practice and a beautiful young wife. Thora is long, blond and far richer than he. But Alex's surveillance shows she recently visited a divorce lawyer ...

— Connelly

## Tag-Team Terror

The lawyer is loathsome, but the true evil emanates from his partner, the Southern-fried psychopath Dr Eldon Tarver, a brilliant scientist who has learned how to induce both cancer and strokes in people in ways that cannot be detected. The men's scheme — divorce by murder — is both cynical and lurid in the extreme, but Iles develops his characters, and the medical details, with such care that it becomes plausible.

— Patrick Anderson, *The Washington Post*

## Balancing Act

He nicely balances the book's monsters with the decent people who nurse their dying mothers and coach their children's Little League teams. Iles takes his title from the saying that "True evil has a face you know and a voice you trust," and demonstrates its truth.

— Anderson

## "Too dark for some"

The novel leads, inevitably, to a showdown between the FBI agent who is fueled by love

and the scientist who burns with malice. It's a wham-bam ending that features snakes, SWAT teams, helicopters, speedboats, government assassins and heroic sacrifice, all with a child's life in the balance. *True Evil* will be too dark for some readers, but for those who enjoy lush, full-tilt thrillers, it will be engrossing and fun.

— Anderson

## Solid Conclusion

*True Evil* is a fascinating novel. Greg Iles takes his time

letting the various plot lines neatly coalesce and offers a coherent conclusion. The characters are perfectly cast in their roles, and readers get to hate the bad guys and cheer for the good ones. The medicine and science at the heart of the book are chillingly real. Readers need to think about this and whether or not our society is ready for the true evil that is out there in the world.

— Barbara Lipkien Gershensonbaum, *Bookreporter.com*

(By Derrick Sobodash)

## Local shelf

## Tapas: A Taste of Spain in America

By José Andrés, Richard Wolfe  
256pp, Clarkson Potter, 300 yuan

In *Tapas*, a collection of 100-plus recipes for Spain's savory small dishes, chef José Andrés writes of journeying during his military service to Cadiz, in southern Spain, where he was "able to see the wonders of frying first hand." The passion that would lead an on-leave soldier to investigate a cooking technique infuses the book, which is something new under the sun.

## Catch Me When I Fall

By Nicci French  
336pp, Warner Books, 165 yuan

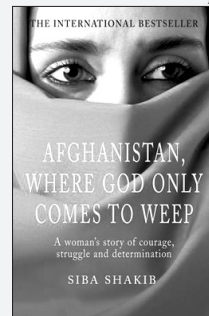
Holly Krauss, the successful businesswoman at the center of *Catch Me When I Fall*, has a secret. She's out of control, and not only that, but people are extorting money from her, stalking her, and trying to kill her. Or is it all a figment of Holly's manic-depressive imagination? There are plenty of fireworks in this suspense story — both real and imagined — as the authors push the genre limits with their empathetically challenged heroine. Narrator Anne Flosnik conveys the thrills and terror of Holly's bipolar dilemma and does a first-rate job differentiating the two narrative voices, the self-destructive Holly and her ever-supportive best friend, Meg.

### Available:

#### Beijing Bookworm

Where: Building 4, Nan Sanlitun Road, Chaoyang  
Tel: 6586 9507

## Afghanistan, Where God Only Comes to Weep



By Siba Shakib  
304pp, Century, 96 yuan

The moving story of an indomitable Afghan woman, Shirin-Gol, who rebelled against life within a forced marriage, spent behind the walls of her house, and who wanted an education for her children so that they might have the chance to live free from the fear and poverty she had known since childhood.

### Available:

#### Foreign Languages Bookstore

Where: 235 Wangfujing  
Dajie  
Tel: 6512 6903

(By Han Manman)



By Chu Meng

The cuisine, little different today from what it was 150 years ago when French colonizers took their dishes to then Indochina, is a delightful combination of Asian and Gallic cooking. Vietnam is fortunate in its abundance of food ingredients, and its people are masters of elaborate culinary techniques. Food preparation is an art even among ordinary Vietnamese, producing dishes which have become globally famous.

# Refreshing taste of Vietnam

## Second stop in Southeast Asian dining



Fried chips and tomato-based Vietnamese lamb curry rice

### Bistro dining

By Chu Meng

High ceilings, comfortable couches and a nice bar characterize this Beijing bistro. It provides a quiet spot for an intimate dinner with your sweetheart.

The food is a mix of Indian, Chinese and Southeast Asian cuisines. The tomato-based Indian lamb curry dish was quite different from your typical curry dish. However, the flavor was enjoyable, and the presentation good.

We ordered deep-fried wasabi prawns (80 yuan), which had six large prawns battered in tempura and wasabi. This was a little on the tame side – not hot enough to make us cry. But, it looked and tasted good.

Finally, we had the asparagus and broccoli dish (30 yuan), which, while good, was nothing special for *xilanhua*. What was a

bit out of the ordinary was the price for this dish!

We were satisfied with the decor, friendly service, atmosphere and food, but we did not think the prices were warranted: 120 yuan for the dinner, excluding beverage or alcohol. The 10-yuan bowl of rice was about 10 times what you'd normally spend in restaurants of comparable food quality, though not as stylish. If decor and surroundings are important, this is a good choice. If price and value are important, keep looking.

#### Alfa (La Mission)

Where: No 5 Xingfuyicun (opposite north gate of Workers' Stadium), Chaoyang

Open 11-2am

Tel: 6413 0086

Cost: 100-150 yuan

Photo provided by Alfa



Roasted pork and prawn meat with bread

### Pursuing elegance

By Chu Meng

Located in what looks like an old French colonial mansion is actually one of Beijing's more elegant Vietnamese restaurants.

Nam Nam's food is heavily Saigon-style, with only vague traces of genuine Vietnamese flavors – which is not to say it wasn't an immensely satisfying dining experience.

We suggest you start with a Ma Cherie Combination Platter, made up of a range of well-known Vietnamese snacks.

The Giant Head Prawn, cooked French-style, was rich and buttery, and pleased at first bite.

A good tip on finishing your meal is to chew a piece of mint, which you will also find in many Vietnamese dishes.

This restaurant is child friendly with a small indoor goldfish pond to keep the kids occupied while you savor your meal. The best part is that after dinner, you can stroll to some nice cafés nearby.

#### Nam Nam

Where: No 7 Sanlitun Bei Lu (beside the Friendship Supermarket), Chaoyang

Open: 10:30am-10:30pm

Tel: 6468 6053

Cost: 70-150 yuan per person

Photo provided by Nam Nam



Vietnamese beef rice

Photos provided by Nuage

## Old Beijing's traditional Vietnam

By Chu Meng

Hidden among a maze of *hutongs* along Shichahai's eastern shore, this trendy two-story Vietnamese-style restaurant now enjoys a good reputation after a disappointing start.

Its décor features stained glass windows, which, when hit by sunlight scatter myriad colors all around. There are also 'paddy' chairs that add a true touch of Vietnam.

But the main draw is the food. The owner credits the chefs and their injection of a new balance of northern and southern Vietnamese techniques to the preparation of dishes. And its menu really helps diners from other countries by listing the names of

dishes in English, as well as the mother tongue.

Listings include standards such as papaya salad, roasted pork and prawn meat with sugarcane, Vietnamese beef noodles in soup, crisp spicy fish served with mixed herbs, and regular spring rolls – deep-fried to suit Beijing palates. Round off your meal with authentic Vietnamese coffee, rich in flavor and a great caffeine jump-start to the rest of your evening.

#### Nuage

Where: No 22 Qianhai Dongyan, Xicheng

Open: 11am-2pm,

5:30-10pm

Tel: 6401 9581

Cost: 90 yuan per person



Papaya salad



## Shopping

### Free cosmetics

Spend over 880 yuan at any Shiseido counter in Beijing and get a free set of cosmetics until the end of the month.



### Fur coat sale

Fur coats at Shang Pin Zhe Kou (No 158 Yayuncun Bei Lu, Haidian) are 60 percent off the original price until January 30. For details, call 8527 8090.



### Winter clothing sale

Selected winter clothing at Zhong You Shopping Mall (No 176 Xidan Bei Dajie, Xicheng) are 30-50 percent off until the end of the month. For details, call 6601 8899.



### Pierre Cardin sale

All Pierre Cardin products at Beichen Shopping Center (No 8 Anli Lu, Chaoyang) are 10-15 percent off until January 30. For details, call 6499 3263.



### Free jewelry case

Buy Guerlain's eye cream worth 1,380 yuan at any of its counters in the city and get a free jewelry case. Offer good until the end of the month.



### Gift set

Spend over 680 yuan on Anna Sui products at any shopping mall in Beijing and get a gift set. Offer good until the end of the month.



### Free necklace

Zoom Jewelry's VIP members get a free necklace with a purchase of over 300 yuan at its counter in Jin Yuan Yan Sha Mall (No 1 Yuanda Lu, Haidian). Offer good until the end of the month. For details, call 8887 5388.



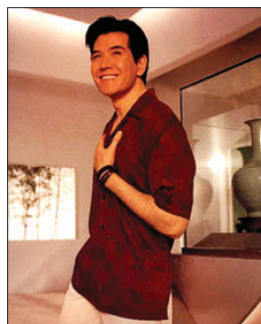
### Clothing sale

Elina Createur items at Modern Plaza (No 130 Haidian Lu, Haidian) are 20 percent off until January 31. For details, call 6257 6688.



### Men's clothing sale

Selected Youngor clothing in stores all throughout Beijing are 25 percent off until January 24. For details, call 6513 1887.



### Shopping discount

Goods at Pacific Plaza (No 133 Xidan Bei Dajie, Xicheng) are 20-70 percent off until the end of the month. For details, call toll free number 800 810 2158.



### Furniture sale

Lot furniture at Illinois Store (No 9 Dongsihuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang) is on sale this month. For details, call 8843 3998.



## Restaurants

### Roast fish voucher

Spend over 100 yuan at Fishman roast fish restaurant before January 21 (No 15-8 Dongzhimen Nei Dajie, Dongcheng) and get a 30-yuan voucher. For reservations, call 8406 1645.



### Hot pot voucher

Spend over 100 yuan at Zhu Yuan Cun hot pot restaurant (No 8 Zaojunmiao, Haidian) and get a 20-yuan voucher. For reservations, call 6213 2269.



### Southeast Asian meal

Savor Thai and Southeast Asian dishes, along with a glass of wine, at Lotus Root Thai restaurant (No 37 Xiejie Di'anmen Wai Dajie, Xicheng) for only 98 yuan per person. For reservations, call 8401 5544.



### Dine at a discount

Dine at Dark restaurant (No 39 Jianguomen Wai Dajie SOHO, Chaoyang) until the end of this month and enjoy a 30 percent discount.



### Indian buffet

Sample authentic Indian dishes at Raj Indian restaurant (Di'anmen Wai Dajie, Xicheng) and enjoy free flowing beer and Indian ice cream for only 128 yuan per person. For reservations, call 6401 1675.



### New coffee drink

This New Year, Starbucks brings you its new Double Mocha Macchiato. For details, call 8599 1390.



## Others

### Photography discount

Have your art photos taken at Butterfly Tree Studio (No 3 Tiao Dongdan, Dongcheng) and enjoy their 20 percent discount until Valentine's Day. For details, call 8511 8848.



(By Terrence Lu)

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By He Jianwei

Human beings lived together in different tribes in primitive society. Every tribe had a name according to its features. In the 21st century, people are living together in "tribes" on the Internet.

Chinese use *ke* to describe groups of people. For

example, people who like to blog are called *bo ke*; People who make flash videos are called *shan ke*.

A new emerging *ke* is *wei ke*, or 'Witkey' in English. These people sell their ideas or knowledge – for a price. They also post rewards for the best proposals on the Internet.



# Witkey it to sell your idea



## What's in a name?

In July 2005, Liu Feng coined the name 'Witkey' to describe his website, witkey.com. "The name popped into my head after the idea," Liu says. "The first name I came up with was '21 Brain,' because the ability to generate ideas will be crucial in the 21st century."

"One day the word 'Wit' was haunting in my mind. It means 'wisdom' or 'intelligence,' which was what I wanted to express. However, what to put after 'Wit' was a problem. I tried 'Wit Sky' and 'Wit Home,' but I wasn't satisfied until 'Witkey' popped into my head," he says.

"The word 'keyword' is familiar to programmers, so I stuck 'key' after 'wit'. Therefore, it has two meanings. First, it's the key to wisdom; secondly, wisdom is a keyword for the 21st century."

After the word was coined, other websites that trade ideas adopted the name 'witkey.' For example, zhuhajie.com.cn has announced plans to build China's most reliable witkey platform, and taskcn.com has named its registered users as witkeys.



## Successful trading cases

Most people post requests like asking other to design a logo, name a baby or name a company, although Liu says logo design wasn't in his original plans.

"It can affect the business of design companies, because a logo could be sold this way for less than 500 yuan," he says.

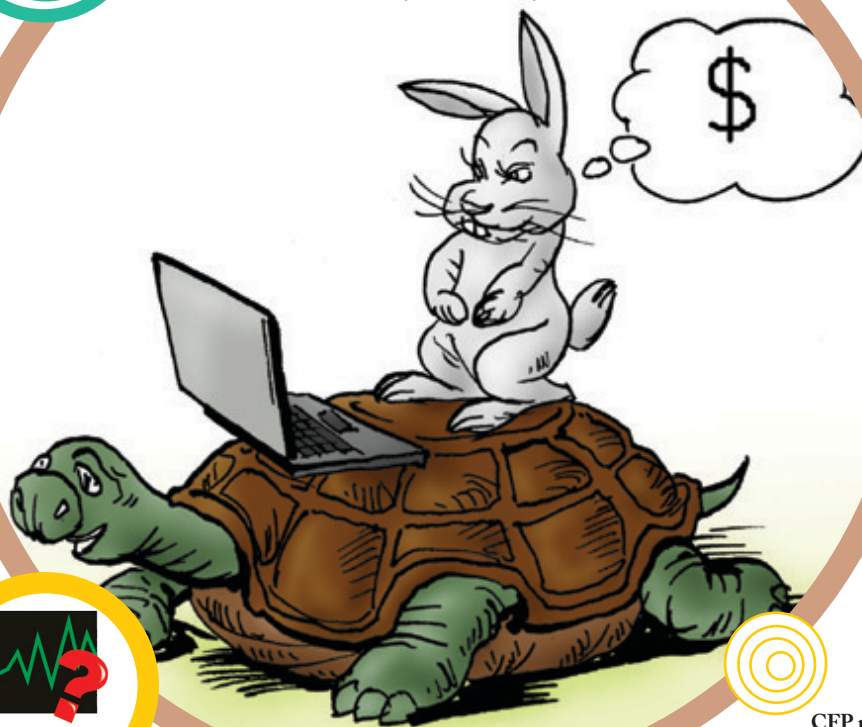
On his website, he gave a list of successful trades, including design of logos, the most touching things that happen in life and a plan for a birthday party.

A mobile phone BBS needed a logo and icons for buttons and bid 500 yuan for a series of designs. In the end, they chose rabbit324's (a witkey's user's name) design.

Another witkey, a mother of a two-year-old baby, posted a task to ask how to teach Chinese babies to speak fluent English and bid 50 yuan for the best ideas. She chose four witkeys among as many as 500 answers, each one a witkey's personal experience.



Could I sell my idea? Witkey it!



CFP photo



购物交流



东拉西扯



口袋影像



手机应用



手机门诊



淘淘二手机

Icons for buttons designed by a witkey

## The future of witkey:

Witkey is still on trial, and Liu says it has a long way to go. "I'm still focused on the program and how to further develop Witkey," he says. "We want to set up an 'expert witkey,' which would be very valuable."

"I hope the future of witkey is asking and answering more and more questions about science and technology. Witkey will be a way to gain knowledge and spread wisdom in the future," he says.



## The birth of the idea

Liu is still working to improve his website and his idea. When asked how he came up with the idea for Witkey, he says he'd almost forgotten the whole suffering experience.

His undergrad degree is in computer science. "We always defined the Internet as a link between computers, cell phones, MP3s and other machine terminals. Actually the terminal of the Internet is the brain of human beings," he says.

In June 2005, Liu got an idea to design a platform to trade knowledge, experience, skills and wisdom. "I'm an Internet worm. If I have any questions, I'd like to ask other netizens in BBSs. Unfortunately, I rarely got perfect answers," he says.

"Part of the reason is some netizens didn't like to answer questions. I know – I don't usually reply to questions on a BBS. It really takes time and effort," he says.

"To get the information, you need to pay for it. More and more people agree on that."

Under the direction of his supervisor, he devoted his summer vacation to writing the program that would become Witkey. He worked almost 12 hours a day.

In July 2005, he posted an article about his model on the Chinese Academy of Science's BBS. "Witkey is a kind of information that is a crucial on the Internet. It is the people's answers to the questions from their own knowledge, skills and experiences," he wrote.

After he introduced his program to classmates in a lecture in September 2005, he put the idea on his blog for people to discuss.

As more and more people have accessed witkey.com, the website has become commercialized since last September.

"Ideas should be priced," Liu says. It's a cornerstone of his plan to help one human access multiple brains. "We usually answer the questions in our spare time. With Witkey, our brains are linked through one platform," he says. Liu compared the setup of Witkey to how computers work in tandem over a network.

There are more than 300,000 people registered on witkey.com, but "that figure doesn't reveal the actual number of witkey in China, because some users have more than one ID."

Photos provided by witkey.com



By Gan Tian

Every little boy who watched Superman and every little girl who watched Catwoman all have one thing in common: the desire to pull on some spandex and turn into a superhero! Who knew those crazy childhood fantasies would be acted out in adulthood ...



# Crazy about Cosplay



## Kikyo's costume

Kikyo is one of the main characters in the anime *InuYasha*. As a powerful witch in feudal Japan, she was great at killing monsters with her bow. She lived a lonely life after her lover fell in love with another girl who looked identical to her. All her passion and elegance is captured in this red *hakama* and white *haori*. Maybe wearing this will draw the boys' eyes.

Available: 135 5260 5962 for orders  
Price: 180 yuan



## Gryffindor scarf

This has the coat-of-arms for the House of Gryffindor at Hogwarts. It was constructed by printing the emblem on transfer paper, transferring it to a scrap of white fabric, cutting it out, doing a satin stitch around the edge, and then sewing it onto the scarf by hand. But don't think wearing the "Harry Potter Scarf" alone is enough for you to be able to cast magic. You're only a "muggle" in reality.

Available: F5, Zhongyou Shopping Center, No 178 Xidan Bei Dajie, Xicheng  
Price: 68 yuan



## Cloud's gloves

The *Final Fantasy* series gives its fans a lot of room for imagination, except for when their lead actor Cloud finally got together with Tifa! How could he do that!? It broke the hearts of thousands of teenage girls of marrying Square-Enix's Prince Charming! However, they still can hold onto Cloud's gloves and feel his warmth and power! Ooops!

Available: shop33131279.taobao.com  
Price: 55 yuan

Photos by Gan Tian

## Harry Potter wand

Isn't this just a stick? I'm sure I can make you one if you want. I mean, 98 yuan for a stick! This is like robbery! Yes, I know it's a 'wand', not a stick, but outside of Hogwarts, they're practically the same thing!

Available: B/2, 77 Street, Xidan, Xicheng  
Price: 98 yuan



## Geta

For hardcore anime fans, *geta* are very important ... for 'becoming a woman!' Just imagine ... it doesn't quite match up when you see a lady strolling down the street in a kimono and stilettos! I'm telling you, "beauty fighters" would never be caught dead in that. Planning to dress like Kamiya Kaoru? Well you'll need *geta*. Even if you don't go all out, they still make nice sandals for summer time. When the handsome boys from school drop by, they'll think you're nice and submissive.

Available: Dragon (Long Yi Yuan Chuang), No 67 Guozijian Jie,

Dongcheng

Price: 95 yuan per pair

## Silk fan

In Tang Dynasty, only aristocrats were allowed to have silk fans. Though it's not real silk, you can still pretend to be an aristocrat like Prince Hong who uses a fan to kill his enemies in *The Story of Great Tang Dynasty*. The best part about this fan is it's really cheap – only 10 yuan! You could hardly buy a piece of silk so cheap in Tang Dynasty.

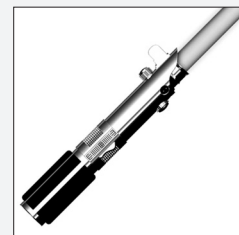
Available: B/1, Soshow, No 40 Chongwenmen Wai Dajie, Chongwen  
Price: 10 yuan

## Star Wars:

### Anakin Skywalker FX Lightsaber Episode III

This is an official reproduction of Anakin Skywalker's lightsaber from *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith*! The bright blue blade ignites with realistic power-up and power-down effects. If you're wondering how it lights up, it's by using three AA batteries – but don't expect the store to provide them!

Available: hotmovieprops.com  
Price: US\$118.99



## Hero necklace

The heroes in the necklace will protect you from being hurt. The next time you meet some bad guys, you can hold it and shout, "Great power, make up!" to turn into a magical girl with fantastic powers. Imagination is fun.

Available: Dragon (Long Yi Yuan Chuang), No 67 Guozijian Jie, Dongcheng  
Price: 38 yuan

If you want to show off your fashion store, have a great collection of fashion accessories and knick-knacks or just want to recommend the best places around town to find fun and flashy items, drop me a line at [gantian@ynet.com](mailto:gantian@ynet.com) or call 6590 2527.



Two students cosplaying  
CFP Photo

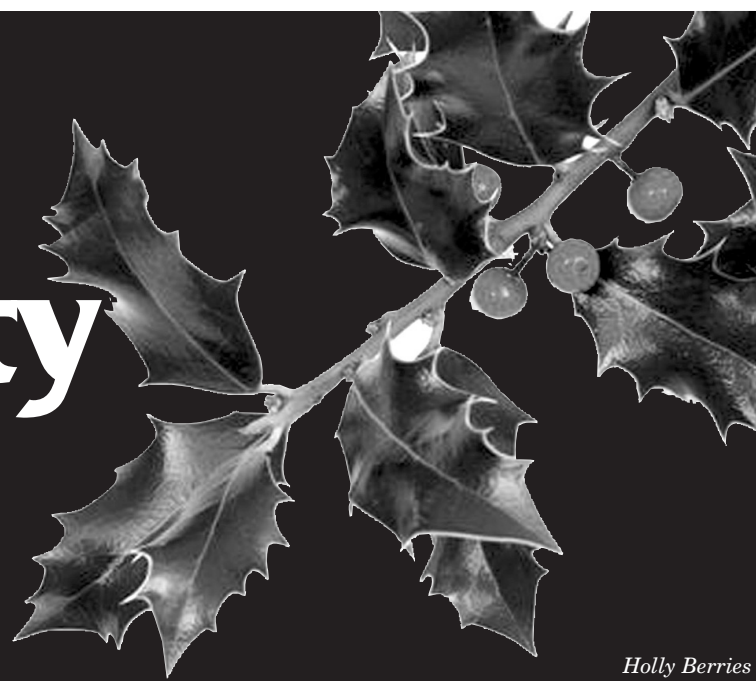


By Huang Daohua

The home, in most people's eyes, is regarded as a safe haven. We choose a warm spot by the fire when the winter drearies settle in, and we rely on our houseplants to purify and renew our stale indoor air. However, the home can be a dangerous place. Many houseplants, maybe even some of your favorites, can be toxic and a threat to your family. Houseplants can be hazards to children and pets; some are poisonous and can cause serious illness and, in rare cases, death.

# Toxic Beauty

## Know your houseplants



Holly Berries

### Toxic houseplants

The term 'poisonous,' Yang Guohua, a doctor at the Health Center at Peking University, said, refers to many kinds of reactions or effects, the majority of which are non-life threatening. A poisonous plant is one that contains a chemical substance, which produces a harmful reaction in the body of humans or animals, when taken in small to moderate amounts.

Among the key effects are allergic reactions that are caused by spores, pollen or naturally occurring volatile compounds emitted into the air by plants; skin rashes or dermatitis due to direct or indirect contact with allergenic or irritant compounds; skin photosensitization because of exposure to allergenic compounds, and internal poisonings or irritations.

A common poisonous houseplant is Dieffenbachia, also known as 'Dumb Cane.' It's a tall, erect plant with large oblong leaves splotted with ivory markings. The leaves are toxic, and chewing them produces an immediate, intense pain followed by swelling of the mouth making it difficult to speak, thus the common name 'Dumb Cane.'

Philodendron, another danger, is a climbing vine with aerial roots and is found in many homes. With their heart-shaped leaves, Philodendrons are popular houseplants that can cause mild and, in some cases, severe poisoning in humans and animals because of the oxalates contained within their leaves. General symptoms of mild poisoning are reddening and inflammation of the skin and itchiness. Severe reactions include stomach irritation, abdominal pain, abnormal heart rate and rhythm, seizures, coma and death.

One familiar houseplant is Aloe. This succulent-type houseplant is a favorite among ladies and is found on many windowsills. The poisonous parts are the cut leaves that, if ingested, may cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps and heart palpitations. A common folk medicine is use of the sap for soothing burns and other kinds of skin irritations. "The sap of aloe is purported to offer relief from minor skin irritations. However, it has been reported to cause dermatitis," Yang said.

Another dangerous houseplant is the Jerusalem Cherry. It's an attractive, interesting plant that bears many colorful round orange, yellow, red or black berries that resemble cherries. The entire plant can be poisonous, especially the berries, which children find very inviting. When ingested, the berries cause gastric irritation and fever, diarrhea and a scratchy feeling in the throat. They may also cause a rash if they come in contact with the skin.

There are lots of houseplants to pay more attention to. Mistletoe berries are commonly seen around the holidays, but should be kept out of children's reach, as they will cause diarrhea and an irregular pulse if ingested. Holly berries are somewhat poisonous, especially if many are eaten. They can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and central nervous system troubles. Yews are evergreens sometimes used for holiday decorations. However, this plant contains a powerful toxic alkaloid that can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and sudden death when eaten.



Hyacinth1



Domb Cane

### Perilous Plants

The following is a list of plants considered toxic. Remember that plants may contain a variety of poisons. They may cause symptoms ranging from a mild stomachache to serious heart and kidney problems.

Amaryllis	Holly Berries
	Hyacinth
Anthurium	Jerusalem Cherry
Apricot kernels	Lantana
Azaleas	Mistletoe
Caladium	Mountain laurel (holiday greens)
Calla Lily	
Chinese Ever-green	Oleander
Colchicum	Philodendron
Daffodil	Ranunculus
Dumb Cane	Rosary Pea
Elephant's Ear	Schefflera
English Ivy	Spathiphyllum
Fishtail Palm	Yew (holiday greens)



Aloe



Caladium

### Guard your children

Houseplants are statistically the number three cause of poisoning in children, right behind medicines and household chemicals. Consider this when decorating if children or pets live in your home.

One way to guard against plant poisoning is to teach your children to never eat plants other than those you tell them are safe. In most cases, keeping plants out of their reach will prevent poisoning. Even a non-poisonous houseplant can be a risk if it's within a child's reach, since leaves and soil can get lodged in the throat and cause suffocation.

### Protecting your pets

Don't forget those other important family members – your pets. Animals are just as vulnerable as humans and sometimes less discerning about what they chew. Yang said there have been reports of dogs, cats and even pet monkeys becoming ill after eating leaves and green berries from ivy. Affected animals typically shake their heads, salivate and paw or rub at their mouth or eyes.

### What you can do

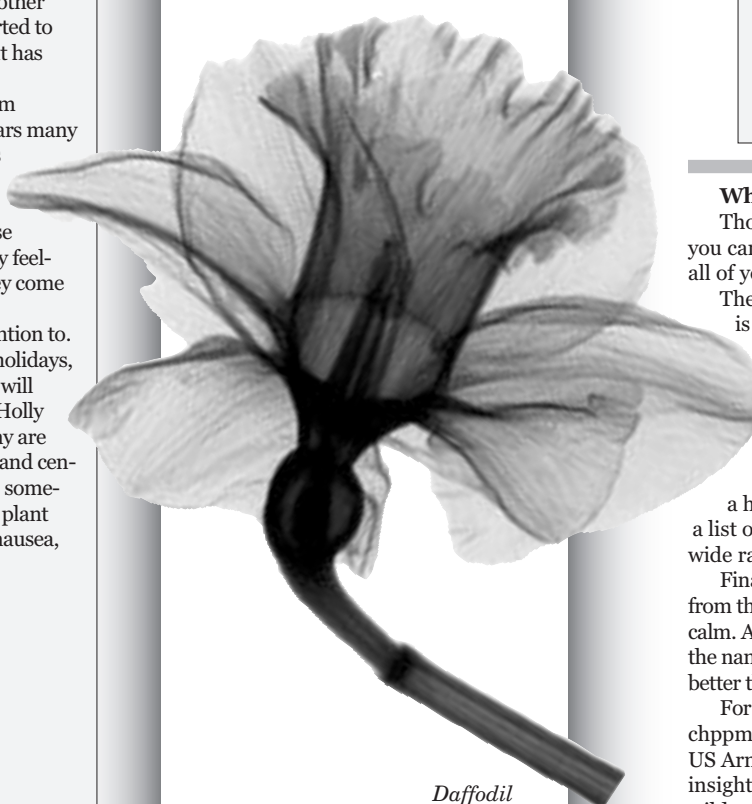
Though danger is everywhere, there is good news: you can safeguard your home – and without giving up all of your plants!

The first step toward preventing plant poisoning is to correctly identify every plant in your home by both the common and Latin names. Plant labels are not just for outdoor use. If you own something that's not plainly recognizable, take the time to look it up in a reference book.

A book like the guide of poisonous plants is a helpful reference tool, and you also may request a list of poisonous plants. Plant toxicity falls into a wide range of classifications.

Finally, if a plant is eaten, remove plant material from the person or animal's mouth immediately. Stay calm. A minute or two spent gathering information, like the name of the plant and how much was consumed, is better than acting in haste.

For more information, visit [chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/ento/PLANT.HTM](http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/ento/PLANT.HTM), the US Army's guide to poisonous plants, to get more insight into additional houseplants, and even toxic wild and garden plants.

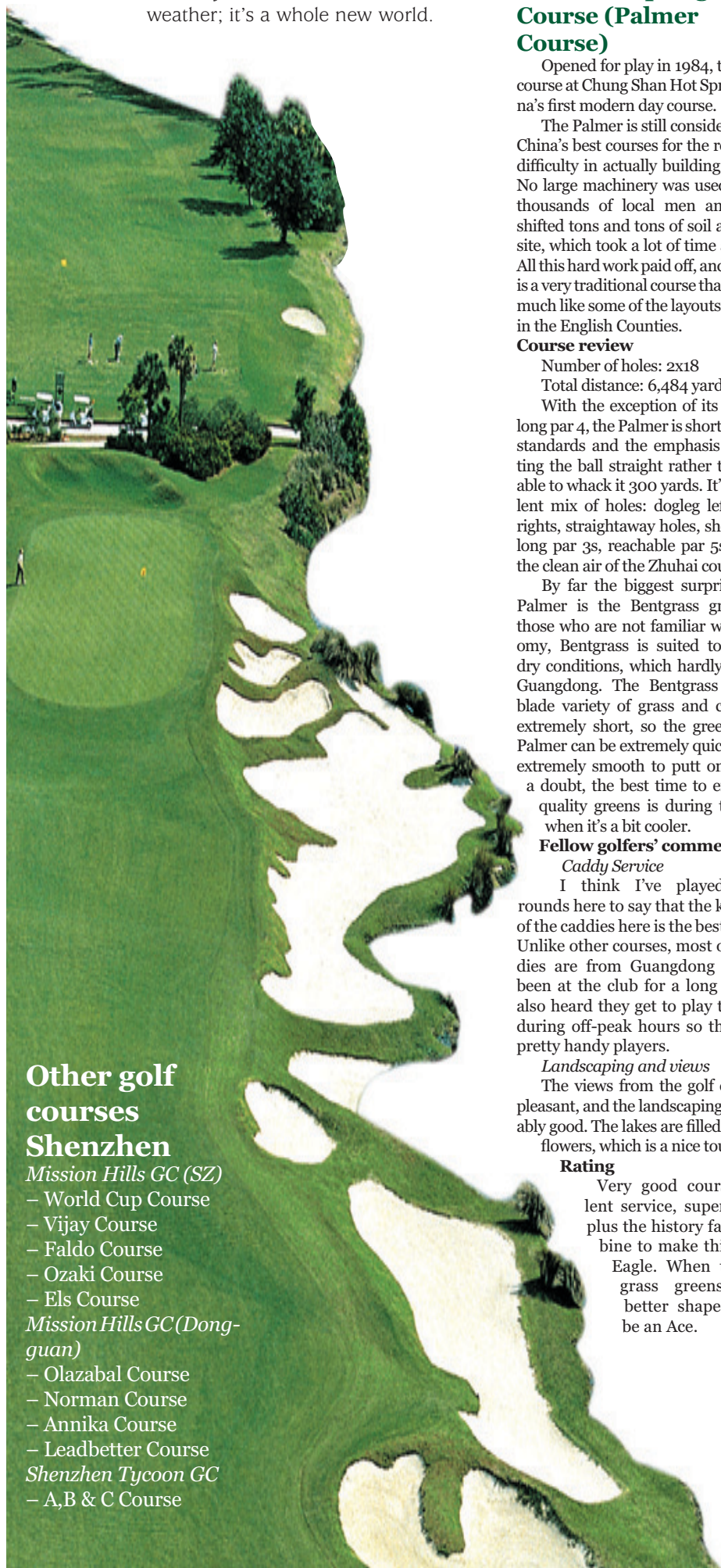


Daffodil



# Golf holidays in southern China

If you can't wait for the frigid winter to end and just want to hit the green for a new golf experience, you may want to look south. The golf courses in northern China won't dry out until early April, but in the south, golfers are enjoying the sport already. And it's not just because of the warm weather; it's a whole new world.



## Other golf courses

### Shenzhen

#### Mission Hills GC (SZ)

- World Cup Course
- Vijay Course
- Faldo Course
- Ozaki Course
- Els Course

#### Mission Hills GC (Dongguan)

- Olazabal Course
- Norman Course
- Annika Course
- Leadbetter Course

#### Shenzhen Tycoon GC

- A, B & C Course



Chung Shan Hot Spring Golf Course

## Guangzhou: Chung Shan Hot Spring Golf Course (Palmer Course)

Opened for play in 1984, the Palmer course at Chung Shan Hot Spring is China's first modern day course.

The Palmer is still considered one of China's best courses for the remarkable difficulty in actually building the place. No large machinery was used. Instead, thousands of local men and women shifted tons and tons of soil around the site, which took a lot of time and effort. All this hard work paid off, and the result is a very traditional course that feels very much like some of the layouts you'd find in the English Counties.

### Course review

Number of holes: 2x18

Total distance: 6,484 yards, Par 71

With the exception of its incredibly long par 4, the Palmer is short by today's standards and the emphasis is on hitting the ball straight rather than being able to whack it 300 yards. It's an excellent mix of holes: dogleg lefts, dogleg rights, straightaway holes, short par 4s, long par 3s, reachable par 5s all set in the clean air of the Zhuhai countryside.

By far the biggest surprise on the Palmer is the Bentgrass greens. For those who are not familiar with agronomy, Bentgrass is suited to cool and dry conditions, which hardly describes Guangdong. The Bentgrass is a fine blade variety of grass and can be cut extremely short, so the greens on the Palmer can be extremely quick, but also extremely smooth to putt on. Without a doubt, the best time to enjoy these quality greens is during the winter when it's a bit cooler.

### Fellow golfers' comments

#### Caddy Service

I think I've played enough rounds here to say that the knowledge of the caddies here is the best in China. Unlike other courses, most of the caddies are from Guangdong and have been at the club for a long time. I've also heard they get to play the course during off-peak hours so they're also pretty handy players.

#### Landscaping and views

The views from the golf course are pleasant, and the landscaping is reasonably good. The lakes are filled with lotus flowers, which is a nice touch.

### Rating

Very good course, excellent service, super caddies, plus the history factor combine to make this an easy Eagle. When the Bentgrass greens are in better shape this will be an Ace.



Spring City Golf and Lake Resort

## Yunan: Spring City Golf and Lake Resort

Spring City Golf and Lake Resort, situated near Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province, is one of the most beautiful golf resorts in the world. Its two courses are set amidst majestic mountains, with a crystal, breathtaking lake with sunny and spring-like weather all the year round, hence its romantic name.

It is rated as Asia's top and China's best golf course, offering a world-class experience. With the Jack Nicklaus course rated No 1 in China by editors of US Golf Digest in June 1999, Spring City is all about the Championship feeling.

Spring City gives a total resort experience in five-star luxury. The clubhouse has an array of activities like swimming, spa, sauna, tennis, water sports, gymnasium and so much more.

### Courses review

#### Mountain Course

Designer: Jack Nicklaus

Number of holes: 18

Total distance: 7,453 yards, Par 72

Spring City's Mountain Course was designed by the Golden Bear himself – Jack Nicklaus. Framed by beautiful native pines and rock outcroppings, the natural beauty is on full display. However, it's also a course equally full of golfing challenges. From the Signature Hole 8, Par 3 to the world famous Hole 18, Par 4, voted one of the top 500 holes in the world by US Golf Magazine in January 2000, this course is truly a golfer's inspiration.

#### Lake Course

Designer: Robert Trent Jones Jr

Number of holes: 18

Total distance: 7,204 yards, Par 72

Sprawled along Yang Zong Hai, this course provides a stimulating golfing experience. As the course steps down to the lake in a series of terraces and palisades, it's breathtaking and challenging at the same time. The Signature Hole 8, Par 3 is a classic – deceptively simple from the tee but the positioning is unforgiving and challenging.

### Designers' comments

Spring City, in the Asia Pacific region, is a golfing experience that capitalizes on the existing features of the property while taking advantage of other elements, such as the dramatic view, changes in elevation and the expansive nature of the site.

– Robert Trent Jones Jr.

The course utilizes the natural undulations of the terrain, thus maximizing the golf strategy with the challenges of side hills and elevated greens and tees.

– Jack Nicklaus



Sanya Yalong Bay Golf Club

## Hainan: Sanya Yalong Bay Golf Club

Yalong Bay Golf Club? Sound familiar? Yeah! It always hosts world professional golf events. It is Sanya's premier destination for fun in the sun, providing visitors with the irresistible combination of a world-class beach.

Yalong Bay is centered on a crescent shaped beach. Those who prefer lounging by the pool to swimming in the sea will find pools of every size here, and for golfers, the 36 hole Yalong Bay Golf Club matches world standards. In addition to golf and water sports, tennis, rock climbing and hiking are very popular among a wide selection of activities and attractions. Yalong Bay National Resort should simply not be missed.

### Course review

Number of holes: 18 (9 with lighting)

Total distance: 7,116 yards, Par 72 (back tee)

Yalong Bay was voted by Golf Digest (USA) as one of the Top 100 Courses Outside of the US. It is very enjoyable, though not the hardest course. The appearance of the water gives it an attractive layout. The course has a good mix of holes with a couple of exciting short par-4s and a risk-reward par-5. The back nine is a little more memorable than the front.

Yalong Bay always seems to be in very good condition – probably because they get so much practice having to prepare the course for the big professional events that come to town. As a resort-course, don't expect the greens to be lightning-quick, but they're not too slow either.

### Fellow golfer's comments

#### Caddies

No gripes at all. Guangdong caddies seem to speak better English though, which is strange given that Hainan is so geared up towards tourism.

### Rating

An excellent place to play for holidaymakers. Relaxed atmosphere and a very playable course makes this the ideal retreat for players of all abilities. The course, though generally flat, always manages to hold interest, and the conditioning is among the best you'll find in Hainan.

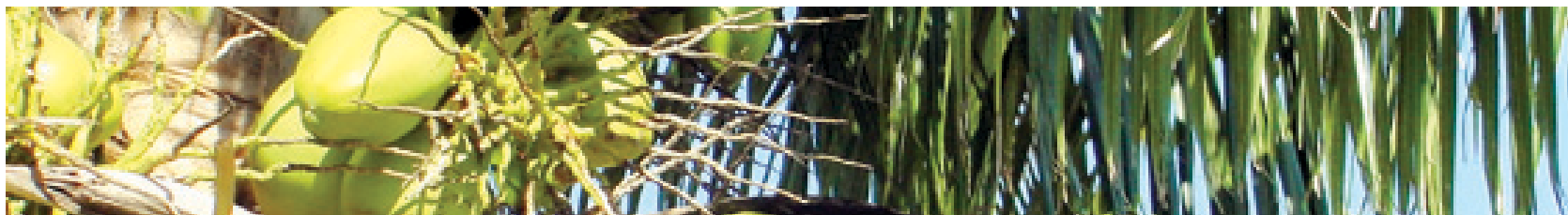
### Facilities

Although the club has a good selection of facilities, they're starting to look a bit old and could do with a revamp. Good news, then, that the club is going to start renovating the clubhouse this year. Definitely looking forward to when it's finished.

CFP Photo

(By Huang Daochen)





Coconut palms dot the Florida landscape, but these sweet tropical fruits turn into missiles in hurricane season!

# Marco Island

## Florida's Paradise Coast

By Derrick Sobodash

Florida is a tourist state. There's no question about that. With 18 percent of its population over age 65 – swinging up to 21 percent when the 'snowbirds' arrive – it's definitely a place people go to get away. One of the state's best kept secrets, at least outside of certain circles, is the City of Marco Island.

Originally named La Isla de

San Marco by the Spanish, Marco is the largest of Florida's Ten Thousand Islands, a chain of mangrove islets off the coast of southwest Florida, with its area of 6,215 hectares, and a great starting point for exploring the other 9,999.

As the island chain is mostly an ecological reserve, there are countless birds and fish native to the area that can be spotted when

channeling about the islands, including dolphins, manatees, and many rare birds – even the bald eagle, the formerly endangered US national bird.

The island itself has a maze-like canal system designed to let homeowners have an outlet to the ocean. For a visitor, how locals so effortlessly navigate the canal system is downright puzzling.

For people seeking a winter

retreat or even a nice place to summer, Marco is a great spot to bum around the beach, go shelling, fishing, experience fine dining, or try out other hobbies like bird watching or sailing.

### Practicalities:

The nearest airport for Marco is Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) in Fort Myers. Most flights require you to connect elsewhere in the USA.

No buses run from Fort Myers to Marco, so you will need to rent a car to travel an hour down I-75 expressway to exit 101.

If you're adventurous (read: insane), take a direct flight to Detroit (DTW), rent a car from Alamo, then burn across the entire USA in 22 hours to drop off the car at Marco's Alamo: a one-day rental costs the same no matter how far you travel.



From left to right: sunrise seen from the bridge to Marco, birds gather on the beach, a crab pops his head out to check if the tide is back soon, luxurious housing and a view of the wide Resident's Beach at low tide.

## Beaches

Being an island, Marco is pretty much surrounded by beaches. The three main beaches are Tigertail Beach, South Beach and the Resident's Beach.

Tigertail, named for its arcing sandbar shaped like a tiger's tail, is one of the oldest beaches on the island. The tail partially disappears at high tide, which can leave you stranded if you don't make it back to the main beach by the time the tide returns. The inner lagoon is perfect for swimming, at no more than 3m deep and with its undertow mostly broken by the sand bar. Swimming beyond the sand bar is not advised, as there's a strong undertow after the bar's drop. The waves get high enough for surfing, but chance visits from sharks make riding the waves a safety gamble.

South Beach and Resident's Beach are two divisions of the same beach, with South Beach being the public one. The beach is sprawling, and the undertow near the shoreline is weak. Unless you are staying in one of the island's most expensive hotels or condos, or if you have a resident friend with a car, you won't be able to enter Resident's Beach.

ProTip: You can still reach Resident's Beach without a pass by walking north from South Beach.

### Practicalities:

Tigertail Beach: Five boardwalks; wheelchair accessible; open daily 8am to sunset; US\$3 parking fee; entrance at 400 Hernando Dr.

South Beach: Open daily 8am to sunset; entrance by walkway on Collier Blvd north of Cape Marco.

Resident's Beach: Picnic area with Chickee Huts; open daily from 8am to sunset; Resident Permit required for entry; entrance at intersection of Collier Blvd and San Marco Rd.

## Shelling

Shelling is a great way to pass time at the beach. If resting on the powdery white sand isn't your thing, Marco has over 50 kinds of shell-life native to its beaches, many of which find themselves stranded on the beach each day at low tide. If you tire of looking for the perfect 'common' shell, you can hunt for any starfish and horseshoe crabs that the seagulls haven't found yet.

One of the best places to hunt for sealife is on 'Sand Dollar Island,' a large sand bar reach-

able if you time a trip to Tigertail right. Follow the tail out to a sandbar only exposed at low tide to find the 'island' rich in sand dollars. Go early – the local kids will clean it out before late risers ever get a chance.

The best time to look for shells is after a storm. On the next low tide, the beaches look like the ocean was churned up and tossed out. Go early before the beach crews shovel them away and the seas reclaim what's left. Severe storms can even wash in sea biscuits and other sea life from as far away as Cuba.

### Practicalities:

If you fail to find anything worth showing off, buy shells at one of the island's shell shops and lie to everyone back home.

## Fishing

If you love fishing, there's no better place to do it than an island – especially an island like Marco. The island's extensive canal system brings in hordes of fish during high tide. Dolphins can be spotted in the canals from time to time, but like the manatees, you can't fish them.

Lane and mangrove snappers, pompano and snook can be pulled in year round. If you rent a boat

and go exploring, you can find barracuda, black, gag and red grouper and jackfish. Dozens of other species migrate through Marco and the surrounding islands from season to season, including black drums, cobia, flounder, Nassau grouper, redfish, sheepshead, spotted seatrout and tripletails.

### Practicalities:

The best way to get out to sea is if you know a local: they'll have a boat or at least a friend with one. If you're on your own, rentals aren't cheap. The Cedar Bay Marina (001-239-642 6717) rents boats for US\$195 to US\$285 depending on whether you plan to rent for a full or half-day. If you want to hop on a chartered boat, call Marco Island Sea Excursions, Inc (001-239-642 6400). For multiple day rentals, it may be cheaper to rent in Naples and boat down to Marco.

## Food

Marco is home to many restaurants that serve almost anything you can think of, but it's safest to stick with fish. The local fish places are the best, and are usually the least expensive. Do not explore foreign cuisine on Marco – its Asian, Mexican and

Italian cuisine ranges from mediocre to bad, and its pizzerias are a joke. Those restaurants are there only to break up the monotony of local life.

Some of the best dining on the island is the Snook Inn, one of the top ten restaurants on the island and top 300 in the US. The Inn has outdoor seating to give a good view of the pelicans and dolphins playing by the docks, and the prices are modest – especially if you order whatever is in season. The homemade Key Lime Pie is a great dessert, and a specialty of south Florida. Most evenings, especially during tourist season, the Inn provides live entertainment in its bar area.

For curious tastes, ask a local where you can eat one of the state's mascots: the alligator. Endangered before 1987, the prehistoric-looking reptile is for sale in many restaurants that buy their meat from 'gator farms' that raise alligators specifically for food. The tail and ribs are the choice parts.

### Practicalities:

The Snook Inn is located at 1215 Bald Eagle Dr; docking room for 20 boats; parking for as many as 100 cars; no smoking; call 001-239-394 3313 for more information.



Gulls play follow-the-leader in the shallows of Tigertail beach.

Photos by Derrick Sobodash



By Han Manman

Objectiva Software Solutions, a leading outsourcing company in China, was founded in 2001. It has become one of the few Chinese companies that have successfully penetrated the US and European outsourcing market.

There are many things that have made Objectiva become such a success. Their unique internship program is one of these. It has developed a large talent pool for the company.

"When selecting resumes, we pay most attention to whether a graduate's major is related to the outsourcing industry and if the person has internship experience. In the interview stage, we not only focus on the intern's technical skills, but also his or her English skills. Our first-round interview is a test of English listening, reading, speaking and writing ability, with greater focus on the listening and speaking parts. The majority of our clients are European and American, and we hold telephone conferences with them every day. The second-round interview concentrates on the candidates' technical and analytical skills, with a focus on their potential for future development. "Our interview is one-of-a-kind. We arrange a debate between candidates, which gives us a better understanding of their character, analytical abilities and interpersonal skills. For example, I once gave a scenario to the candidates during the interview. In this story, people were involved in an accident at sea. When they were evacuated, the passengers could take with them only a small number of things and everything else had to be abandoned. They also had to appoint a team leader to make the final decision. The scenario tests candidates' teamwork skills, which are very critical to outsourcing work since the company needs to build many project teams based on specific project requirements.

During the interview, I always ask about projects candidates were involved at school. I dig deep into their project details instead of the number of the projects they have done. Through doing so, we can figure out who played more important roles because they normally are the people who can talk through their projects while others can merely describe the basics."

"Many college graduates have a typical problem during the interview, they only memorize what is said in their resumes. When I ask questions related to their background, they'll immediately repeat what's on their CV. There is no doubt that a good resume is very important for job hunting. But it is more important to prepare carefully for interviews. If a person cannot answer questions such as what they know about our company and why they want to join us, then I can not say this person is ready for a job interview."

— Cecilia Young, human resources and administration director

# Objectiva: Show me what you're made of



**Sun Yan graduated from the University of Bradford in the UK with a major in marketing and management. She started her internship in June and three months later was promoted to marketing manager.**

My education and working background match this position perfectly. This position needs a person who has a Sino-Western education and experience in marketing and people management. When I came back from Britain, I was hoping to work in a multinational company or at least one that does overseas-related business. I regard the outsourcing industry as a rising sun with a lot of room for development. It is why I chose to become part of it.

During my three interviews, my brain had to constantly switch between Chinese and English mode. What I remember the most was the HR director's question about my thoughts on overtime work. I said that I won't mind working overtime if there is a business need. But I also do not want it to be all my life. The HR director replied that Objectiva doesn't encourage overtime. I was so surprised, because in the IT industry, overtime is considered a standard practice.

I became a team leader soon after I joined the company. After a difficult adjustment period, I

grew into my role. I'm a person who doesn't like bothering others, even if I have to work overtime or spend excessive amounts of energy solving one problem by myself. When my mentor realized this, however, he talked to me and helped me figure out ways to work more effectively. My mentor worked in the US for many years and had a similar experience in his previous job. The irregular one-on-one meetings between us revitalize and inspire me.

For overseas graduates, developing and maintaining a positive attitude are very important to our career success. After having been away from China for some years, you'll need a period to readjust to the relatively new environment after coming back. Many returnees who had working experience have very high expectations when they return, which have become a big barrier to career success. I suggest that a person should first ask themselves what they can offer to the company before they ask for a high compensation plan.

**Comments from Cecilia: Sun suits marketing work. She is very proactive and has a solid education and a strong command of English. I was impressed by her maturity, which shone through in her interview, especially when it came to marketing-related issues. We gave her an interview on her team leadership experience and problem solving capabilities. Her internship experience at Objectiva demonstrated her great potential to achieve.**

Most of my classmates chose to work in Canada after graduation. I once also thought about getting a job in Canada. But because of family reasons, I came back. It's a bit of a challenge to live that far away from my family. Also, in Western countries, I've observed that even if you're talented or work hard, being 'non-native' makes it very difficult for a person to get a promotion.

To be honest, when I came back from Canada, there was a lot of unspoken pressure from parents, relatives and friends. In their eyes, someone who has studied abroad should be able to get a great job upon returning to China.

I did a half-year internship in Canada. In North American countries, schools

always make the arrangement for freshmen and sophomore students to get some job experience before they graduate. Mine was with an outsourcing company and that taught me about Western companies' working culture and management regulations. That kind of environment fitted me so well, and I hoped to find employment in a Western company in China.

I believe the most difficult thing to learn is not technical knowledge, but how to build a good relationship with co-workers, which is hard to learn in school. There's no technical skill in the world that cannot be learned. But a person's emotional quotient is more important in deciding their future.

**Comments from Cecilia: Zhao awed me not just with his English skills, but his positive attitude during the interview. His technical skills and characters are a very good match to our company. When I asked his group some tough questions during the interview, he was always the first one to respond.**



**Zhang Ruibo graduated from Heilongjiang Institute of Science and Technology last year with a major in computer science and technology. He started his internship in August and three months later became a full-time software developer.**

For students who come from not so big name universities, the pressure to find a job can be very high. I studied English very hard and my English is quite good. So when I graduated, I wanted to find a job that would leverage both my computing and English skills.

During my internship, my technical skills improved, plus I learned how to work more efficiently. As a student, I learned theory, but seldom had a chance to put my knowledge into practice. However, at work, I'm trained to think from the client's perspec-

tive. I need to both solve the problem, and also find the best solution in the shortest possible time. But during the half-year I worked for the company, I haven't had to work overtime – not even once, which is unbelievable at an IT company in China.

I would advise graduates to study hard for their majors and to put a lot of effort into studying English. China has too many people and there aren't enough jobs, so when an opportunity presents itself, your all-round ability will determine if you are a winner or not.

**Comments from Cecilia: Immediately after Zhang's last round of interviews, two managers came up to ask me if he could join their team. Without having studied overseas, his English is impressive. At one presentation during his internship, he was the only one who insisted on using English.**



**Zhao Yan graduated from Canada's St Francis Xavier University with a bachelor's degree in computer science and technology. He began his internship in September and in December, he got the offer to become a full-time software developer.**



### Follow Beijing Today

This column is open to those who want to improve their English but lack foreign specialized help. We will review the English articles you send to Shirley\_chen@ynet.com. Suggestions will be

given on how to improve the Chinglish sentences in your articles. All interesting stories are welcome. Please be sure the article is written in English, around 500 words in total. Please do not forget to include your name and address.

# Losing my way home

By Li Lunlin

This was a sunny day on Friday afternoon. My friend and I went to shopping happily. We bought a lot of things that we like. We talked and laughed all the time. We didn't say goodbye to each other until we felt too tired to buy anything.

Then I waited for the 37 bus at the station. But for a very long time the bus didn't come at all. You know the feeling. I felt very anxious and upset. So I decided to walk home because it's not so far away. But I thought that was really a bad decision because I had lost my way home! Can you believe it? I lost the way near my home! To my surprised the buildings became large and the single-story houses were disappeared. In the end I thought there was nothing I could do except took a taxi home. When I got home I was still thinking one thing that maybe I should bought a map for myself

Li Lunlin is a student at the Beijing University of Technology's College of Foreign Languages.



## English expert's comments

By John Gordon

Dear Li Lunlin,

You do a great job of describing a simple yet interesting event in your life. Telling this sort of story is a great way to practice your writing, and I think many of our readers could learn from your example. In what follows, I'll point out some of the grammar and usage mistakes in your writing. Hopefully, my advice will help you do an even better job on your next piece.

In your first sentence you write, "This was a sunny day on a Friday afternoon." First of all, since you're talking about the past, we would normally say, 'It was' instead of 'This was.' Also, using both 'sunny day' and 'Friday afternoon' is a bit repetitive. A more efficient way of writing the sentence would be, 'It was a sunny Friday afternoon.'

A mistake that Chinese students often make appears in your second sentence, when you write that you and your friend "went to shopping." When the '+ing' form of a verb is used, it's rarely preceded by 'to'. So we might say, "I went shopping," "I want to go shopping" or "I shopped," but we wouldn't say, "I went to shopping."

In your second paragraph, you state that you "decided to walk home because it's not so far away." You should have continued to use the past tense and written, 'because it wasn't so far away.' You might ask why you should use the past tense here, since it's describing what you were thinking at the moment. This is where English can get a bit confusing. You should use the past tense, because you're describing your decision at the time, and what influenced your decision at the time was that your home wasn't very far away. I realize this may seem confusing. The best advice I can give is to notice how established writers use tenses in their writing and try to imitate their usage.

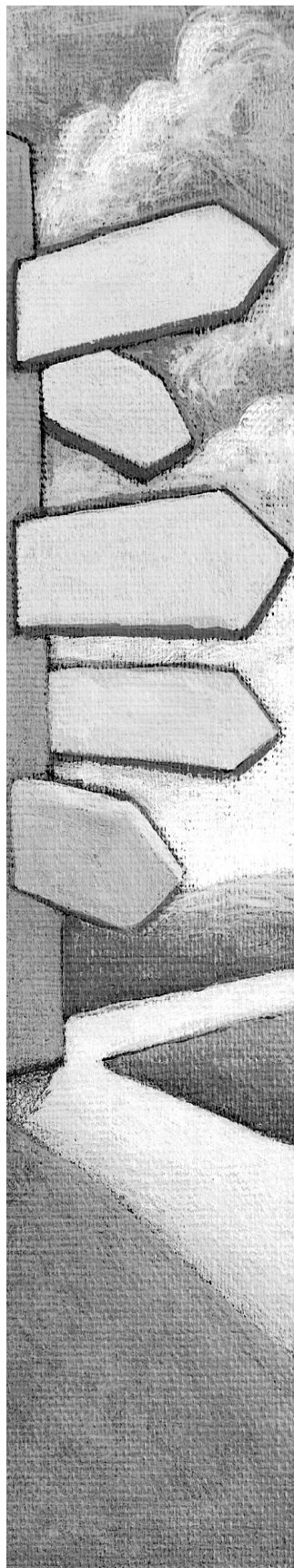
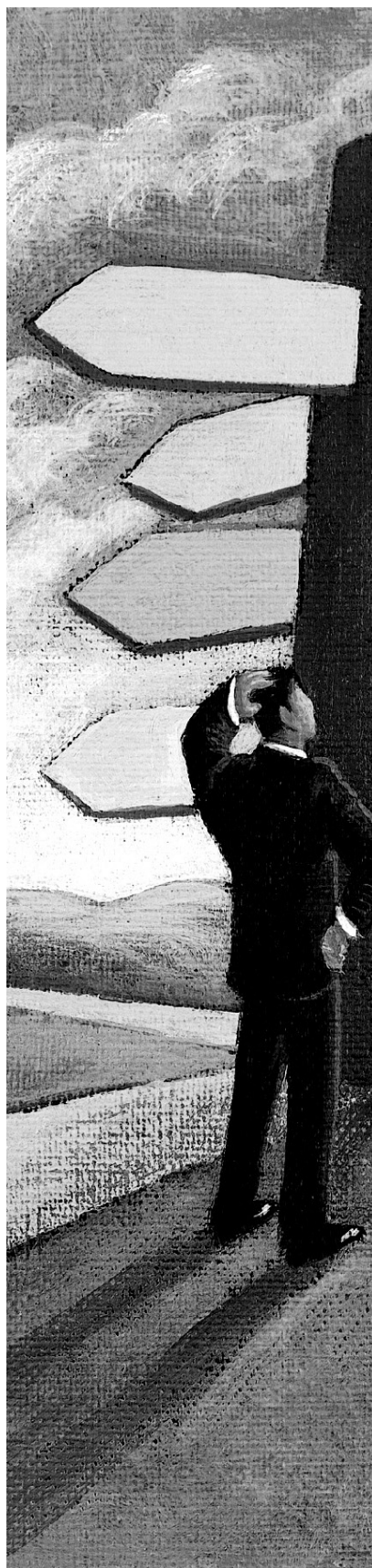
Toward the end of your story, you write that single-story houses "were disappeared," but we don't usually use the verb 'to disappear' in the passive voice. Instead, you should simply say that the houses "disappeared." Also, you could make your final sentence more effective by using a semicolon. "When I got home I was still thinking one thing: maybe I should have bought a map!"

Congratulations on writing an interesting story. I look forward to seeing more of your writing.

All the best,

John

John Gordon is an English teacher at New Channel School.



CFP photo

### Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify chinglish in public areas. If you see any chinglish signs, please take a picture and send them to Shirley\_chen@ynet.com with your name and address.

## Valuing the flying time

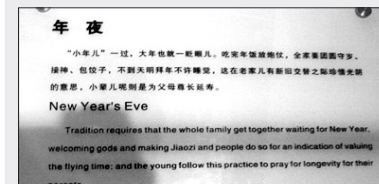


Photo by Tiffany Tan

By Tiffany Tan

Some people consider museums the icing on the cake of life – a storehouse of knowledge in 3D and full color. When you're in a foreign country, exhibit labels you can actually read is cause enough for celebration, even though making sense of them can sometimes give you a throbbing headache.

Here's one in a massive, ultramodern Beijing museum, explaining certain Chinese practices to welcome the New Year: "Tradition requires that the whole family get together waiting for the New Year, welcoming gods and making Jiaozi and people do so for an indication of valuing the flying time."

The phrase is okay until you hit the bump 'an indication of valuing the flying time'. If you want to use a cliché, time flies fast. This line must have been on the writer's mind, picturing 'time' with huge flapping wings. The image works, but the words 'flying time', well, they'll have to make a quick exit. You can improve the last part by saying, "and people do so to mark the passage of time." Maybe next year, we'll be lucky and the old sign will fly away.

### Cool English

New Oriental School offers a helpful list of 30 English expressions in current use among young English-speakers. Start from here, and enjoy a cool journey!

1. I see. 我明白了。
2. I quit! 我不干了!
3. Let go! 放手!
4. Me too. 我也是。
5. My god! 天哪!
6. No way! 不行!
7. Come on. 来吧(赶快)
8. Hold on. 等一等。
9. I agree. 我同意。
10. Not bad. 还不错。
11. Not yet. 还没。
12. See you. 再见。
13. Shut up! 闭嘴!
14. So long. 再见。
15. Why not? 好呀! (为什么不呢?)
16. Allow me. 让我来。
17. Be quiet! 安静点!
18. Cheer up! 振作起来!
19. Good job! 做得好!
20. Have fun! 玩得开心!
21. How much? 多少钱?
22. I'm full. 我饱了。
23. I'm home. 我回来了。
24. I'm lost. 我迷路了。
25. My treat. 我请客。
26. So do I. 我也一样。
27. This way. 这边请。
28. After you. 您先。
29. Bless you! 祝福你!
30. Follow me. 跟我来。







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## Friday, January 19

### Exhibition

**Now and Then – He Sen Solo Exhibition**



Where: Beijing Art Now Gallery, Universal Studios, A8 Caochangdi Art Area, Chaoyang  
When: Tue-Sun 11am-7pm, until January 31  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6551 1632; 6432 2600

### Movie

**Pane e Tulipani (Bread and Tulips)**

Rosalba is a housewife in Pescara with teenage sons, married since 21 to a plumbing supplier whose mistress is her sister-in-law. When a tour bus leaves her, and her husband calls to tell her to stay put,



she rebels slightly and hitch-hikes toward home, deciding on a whim to continue to Venice. Her adventure in Venice begins when she meets strange, but fascinating people. Her husband sends a portly plumber to find her. Will duty and maternal instinct win out, or will Rosalba stay in Venice?

Where: China Film Archives, No 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian  
When: 6pm  
Admission: 40 yuan  
Tel: 6225 0423

### I Muvrini

A musical by Tony Gatlif that tells the story of polyphonic Corsican group I Muvrini. The group was named



after a type of wild sheep that lives in the mountains of Corsica. Throughout their career, I Muvrini promoted the Corsican language and culture.  
Where: French Culture Center, 18 Guangcai International Apartments, Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang  
When: 6pm, until January 24  
Admission: 10-20 yuan  
Tel: 6553 2627

Center, 18 Guangcai International Apartments, Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang  
When: 6pm, until January 24  
Admission: 10-20 yuan  
Tel: 6553 2627

## Saturday, January 20

### Exhibition

**Zero Gravity – Gong Haibo Solo Exhibition**



Where: Gallery Beijing Space, 3818 Warehouse, Dashanzi Art District, No 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang  
When: Tue-Sun 10am-6:30pm, until February 8  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 8459 9304

**Rule of Beauty – He Jianguo Solo Exhibition**



Where: Today International Gallery, 1/F Beijing Today Art Museum, No 32 Baiziwang Lu, Chaoyang  
When: Daily 9am-5pm, until February 10  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 5876 9392

### Movie

**Two famous Italian films**  
**Lo Non Ho Paura (I'm Not Scared)**

While playing one day,



nine-year-old Michele discovers Filippo, who's chained to the ground at the bottom of a hole. Michele sees town baddie Felice nearby and suspects something bad's happening. Michele's unsure whom he should tell this to,

eventually spilling the beans to his closest friend. Michele's parents learn of his discovery and warn him to forget what he saw.

**C'eravamo Tanto Amati (We All Loved Each Other So Much)**

Gianni, Nicola and Antonio become close friends in 1944 while fighting the Nazis. At the end of the war, full of illusions, they settle down. The movie's a story of how these three idealists deal with the inevitable disillusionments of life.

Where: China Film Archives, No 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian  
When: 1pm  
Admission: 40 yuan  
Tel: 6225 0423

## Sunday, January 21

### Exhibition

**Motley Dark – Bao Zhong Solo Exhibition**



Where: Soka Art Center, B-101 Sky & Sea Business Plaza, No 107 Dongsi Bei Dajie, Dongcheng  
When: Tue-Sun 10am-9pm, until February 11  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 8401 2377

### Movie

**Chiedimi Se Sono Felice (Ask Me If I'm Happy)**



*Chiedimi Se Sono Felice* is a slapstick comedy about love and friendship. It stars the highly popular comic trio Aldo, Giovanni and Giacomo. Giovanni

works as a living model in a department store and believes he doesn't have time for a woman. Giacomo dubs the voices of little known actors and cannot find a partner. When an incredibly beautiful woman comes into the scene, the trio's lives are turned on their heads.

Where: China Film Archives, No 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian  
When: 10am  
Admission: 20 yuan  
Tel: 6225 0423

### Il Gattopardo (The Leopard)

In 19th century Sicily, Prince Salina, a great landowner, has to watch the decrease of his power and influence after the unification of Italy. The upper classes try to ignore the nation-

alist movements and the prince is uncertain of his own feelings.

Where: China Film Archives, No 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian  
When: 6am  
Admission: 30 yuan  
Tel: 6225 0423



## Stage in February

### Music

**Golden Songs of Teresa Teng Symphony Concert**

Who: China Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra  
Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng

When: 7:30pm, February 14  
Admission: 80-980 yuan

**Spring Festival Symphony Concert**

Who: Russian Symphony Orchestra  
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen Nan Lu, Dongcheng  
When: 7:30pm, February 18  
Admission: 50-1,000 yuan

### 2007 Spring Concert

Who: China National Opera  
Where: Great Hall of the People, west side of Tiananmen Square, Xicheng  
When: 7:30pm, February 9  
Admission: 100-1,280 yuan

### Mantovani Orchestra Pop Concert

Who: The Mantovani Orchestra (Italy)  
Where: Great Hall of the People, west side of Tiananmen Square, Xicheng  
When: 7:30pm, February 7  
Admission: 180-1,680 yuan

### Dance

#### Swan Lake

Who: Russian National Ballet Theatre and Russian Symphony Orchestra  
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen Nan Lu, Dongcheng  
When: 7:30pm, February 12-13  
Admission: 80-1,280 yuan

#### Sleeping Beauty

Who: Russian National Ballet Theatre and Russian Symphony Orchestra  
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen Nan Lu, Dongcheng  
When: 7:30pm, February 14-15  
Admission: 80-1,280 yuan

#### British Modern Dance

Who: Henry Oguike Dance Company (UK)  
Where: Tianqiao Theatre, No 30 Beiwei Lu, Xuanwu  
When: 7:30pm, February 14-15  
Admission: 80-800 yuan

#### Don Quixote

Who: Russian National Ballet Theatre and Russian Symphony Orchestra  
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen Nan Lu, Dongcheng  
When: 7:30pm, February 19  
Admission: 80-1,280 yuan

#### Giselle

Who: Russian National Ballet Theatre and Russian Symphony Orchestra  
Where: Poly Theater, No 14 Dongzhimen Nan Lu, Dongcheng  
When: 7:30pm, February 20-21  
Admission: 80-1,280 yuan

(By Qiu Jiaoning)